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The Editors
WHERE CREDIT
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ONE DOLLAR

MARCH 14,1980

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Tito's legacy

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Tremors in Belgrade

Pedro Ramet

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Correspondence

Liberals in the fray

Poway, Calif.

To the Editors: Mary Meehan's article, "The Other Right-To-Lifers" [Jan. 18] deserves the highest praise. It also deserves to be reprinted and spread widely throughout the land.

She correctly removes the issue from a conservative constituency into the broader arena that should sponsor this issue. It is very good to see "liberals, radicals and feminists" enter the fray on behalf of pro-life. I echo her fervent hope that "Edward Kennedy, Jerry Brown and Birch Bayh will take another look at abortion."

It's also nice to know that our Catholic intellectuals have been in the forefront of this battle from the very first.

(REV.) CHARLES DOLLER

The single-issue issue

Bryans Road, Md.

To the Editors: Until I read Mary Meehan's article "The Other Right-to-Lifers" [Jan. 18], the presence of feminists, liberals, radicals and peace people in the Pro-Life ranks was largely a secret from me, just as she suggests it was from almost everyone.

A longtime member of peace and human rights organizations and efforts, I am naturally encouraged to consider the possibility of some kind of collaboration with at least a wing of the Pro-Life movement. We are few enough, God knows, we who regard the return of the death penalty as a step back to barbarism and who are convinced that we must put an end to war before it puts an end to all life. And I, for one, tend to regard the aborting of the unborn in nearly three out of every ten pregnancies as additional evidence that our society may be blindly choosing death, not life.

Nonetheless, I have serious difficulties with Ms. Meehan's suggestion that liberal politicians need to take another look at the Pro-Life position. She does not, for one thing, deal with the objection that a Human Life [illegible]endment would be unenforceable, an[illegible]t such an absolute ban would bring gr[illegible]ter evils in its wake than it would cure, much in the fashion of the Prohibition Amendment.

She does not persuade me that the Pro-Lifers have faced up to the evil that they do when they retire from the U.S. Senate a friend of peace and human needs like Dick Clark of Iowa and replace him with a friend of the Pentagon and the right wing like Roger Jepsen. (I concede, of course, that undoubtedly Ms. Meehan and other liberals and radicals among the Pro-Lifers disapprove of the liberal-killing propensities of the main body of the movement.) It is indeed deplorable that on the hit list of the Pro-Lifers are such foes of militarism and advocates of social justice and human rights as Sen. Culver, Sen. McGovern, and Rep. Drinan. Jesuit Drinan while president of the Boston College Law School, several years before the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, was deeply concerned about "the contemporary assault on the right of the human fetus to be born." He warned Catholic church leadership that legalized abortion in some form was on the way and that Catholics must seek to mitigate or diminish the evil coming from this development.

Notre Dame president Rev. Theodore Hesburgh last October summed up the damage being done by one-issue Pro-Lifers: "We have witnessed the fact that political candidates who agree 95 percent with Catholic principles of social justice in most issues of public policy have been defeated by their opposition on this one issue, and have been replaced by candidates who, agreeing superficially on this issue of abortion, disagree with us on almost every other issue bearing on justice and equality."

ELBERT R. SISSON
President, Interfaith Peace Guild

Courting the Court

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: Mary Meehan's catalog [Jan. 18] of liberal activist pro-lifers seems fairly complete. If she does not mention liberals who seek to reduce abortion by persuading the Supreme Court justices that their decisions legalizing abortion were wrong, then it must be that there are not in fact many liberals engaged in such efforts.

That is a shame. The justices are reasonable men, naturally disposed to listen to reasonable pleas. Liberals too are supposed to be reasonable people. More, they often like to regard themselves as scholarly. Why can't they dig down a little to provide the reasons that will persuade the justices to change their views and their votes?

What of past reversals? We all know the *Dred Scott* decision was reversed; but that was really reversed by the Civil War. Another example of reversal, this time by patient, scholarly work, is provided by the *Erie Railroad* case of 1938.

Erie was of classic beauty and simplicity; a true model of reversal. In *Erie*, the Court abandoned a policy that had been adhered to consistently for 96 years. Over those years, the old policy had become obviously unreasonable and unpopular. But these two factors alone were not enough for reversal. There had to be a third element, an aggressive individual, who in this case was Charles Warren. *Erie* contains vital lessons for pro-life. Just a summary of it will make that clear. *Erie* ran:

1) The old policy had been based on historical error.

2) The old policy had given rise to many evils.

3) It had been the subject of much public complaint.

4) That old policy is now reversed as unconstitutional.

What was the historical error? It was

(Continued on page 158)

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WHERE CREDIT IS NOT DUE

ONE PROBLEM with inflation—part of what keeps it going—is that it makes socially beneficial behavior irrational. Some easy numbers make the point. Most of us have in our pockets one or more credit cards that allow us to make $1,000 in purchases with an interest charge of about 15 percent. That's 18 percent on the first $500 and 12 percent on the second. Or we might be able to get a cash advance and pay 12 percent on the whole thing. That is how it works in New York, and where you live the figures are probably similar.

Most of us are not General Motors, and these days that looks like a good thing, because if G.M. goes to the Chase Manhattan Bank, that $1,000 (and you may add zeros at will) will cost them over 16 percent. We think one would be forced to admit, too, that General Motors thinks a bit harder and longer before it borrows that money. For that reason and some others we needn't remind you of, it is a better risk than we are. And yet it pays more.

But there is another, higher interest rate still to consider. It is the rate we are charged for *not* incurring that $1,000, for postponing that rather large discretionary purchase. This interest is otherwise known as inflation. If we project January's rise in the Consumer Price Index to an annual rate it comes out somewhere over 18 percent. Of course, one month is a narrow base to project from. The annual rate could be lower. It could also be higher.

In fact, it could very likely be higher if enough people refuse to behave irrationally. Rational behavior responds to simple arithmetic. If you make that credit card purchase now, you will be *making* 3 percent interest (or 18 minus 15 percent) on it before taxes. After taxes, depending on your bracket, you will make 6 to 12 percent (or 18 minus 12 to 6 percent), because the interest payments are tax deductible. It seems we have built a world in which stereo systems and refrigerators pay interest, and at a better rate than banks. In fact, if you and enough other people make the rational choice about what to do with your money, your returns may be even higher. That much cheap borrowed money chasing goods and services could drive inflation to 20 percent and beyond. Then you'll be making 10 to 14 percent—or 12 to 16 percent—on your G.E. No-Frost. Better and better.

Worse and worse, really. The 10 percent return will be in dollars that have lost a much larger percentage of their value. This irrational, wounding effect for society as a whole arises from the rational behavior of its individual members.

There is pretty clear evidence that consumers are acting more rationally lately. They are making the kinds of economic calculations that would have seemed like too much trouble a few years ago. An instance complementary to the one we have been discussing is the phenomenal growth of "money market funds," a higher yielding alternative to savings accounts that gives smaller investors a piece of the action in Treasury Bills and other short-term financial instruments that pay a rate of interest

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closer to the ones they can get from their refrigerators. Peopl who were scarcely aware of Treasury Bills a year or so ago a now watching interest rates closely and going for the best on whether as savers or buyers on credit. But mostly as buye

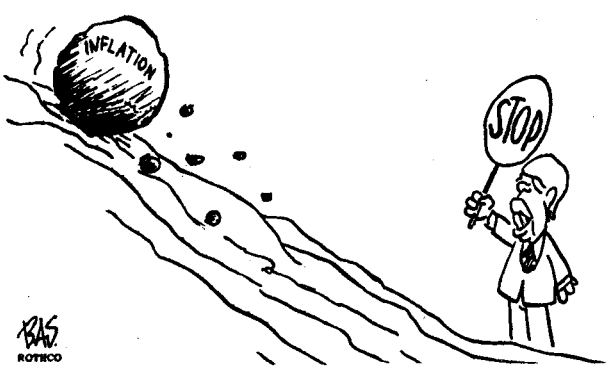
One way of getting at this problem is to make consumer credit more expensive. Banks, of course, are motivated to such price-rationing behavior simply by the need to preserve the profitability of their credit card business. They are, after all, caught in a tightening squeeze between the rising cost of money and the 18 percent finance charge they are held to in states like New York. Recently Walter Wriston, the Chairman of New York's Citibank, threatened to pull the bank's credit card operation out of New York—with a consequent loss of 2,000 jobs—if the 18 percent ceiling was not raised.

But would this reduce credit card spending enough to have an impact on inflation? Would it alter the rational calculation that it is better to buy now than later? We think not. Finance charges would have to rise to an unlikely height before people would be convinced that they were worse than inflation. Furthermore, the charges are not even imposed for the first month or so, and free money has an implied interest payment *to the consumer* that is equal to the rate of inflation, currently about 18 percent a year. And, to a degree, the finance charges are hidden, not watched closely every month.

We like better an idea suggested by Congressman Jim Wright of Texas, that credit purchases of cars and refrigerators should require a 25 percent cash down payment. We would like to see this rule applied to all credit card purchases of from $200 to $500, with a higher percentage down payment—say, 30 percent—above $500.

This would introduce a needed element of delay into discretionary purchases and might help break the inflationary momentum that arises simply from inflationary expectations. Such was the intended effect of the "income insurance" bill that failed in Congress a year ago. That bill would have guaranteed a tax deduction to compensate for the difference between the rate of inflation and a proposed moderate rate of increase in wages for workers. The delayed compensation, simply because it was delayed, would have dampened inflation, and it might have worked. A restriction on consumer credit along the lines we have suggested might have the same effect one stage further down the path from the payroll to the merchant's cash register.

The delay in discretionary spending might also encourage saving, at least to a degree. The decline of saving in the United States, so rational from an individual point of view, has been very damaging to the general economy, drying up sources of investment and generally fueling inflation. The habit of saving will probably have to become established before it can be said to be the result of rationally motivated economic behavior. The required down payment on credit purchases would compel saving until economic motivation made such compulsion unnecessary, that is, until the happy day when saving was actually a way to get a leg up on inflation instead of falling further and further behind it.



ANOTHER NICARAGUA?

People who lament the absence of moderate forces for change in Central America ought to take another look at El Salvador. When middle-of-the-road Christian Democrats and Social Democrats joined with younger officers in a ruling junta last October to pave the way toward land reform and an end to political repression, what did they get? A threat of a right-wing coup by the army high command, the assassination of El Salvador's Christian Democratic attorney general, and a warning that fifteen more Christian Democratic leaders were marked for death. The sparks of reform were all but stamped out. The U.S. has been giving both economic and military aid to El Salvador, a nation where under two percent of the population (the '14 families") own sixty percent of the land. This commitment appears to have been reinforced by a perverse reading of the "lesson of Iran," although it was a U.S. threat to withdraw aid that kept the Salvadorean military leaders from installing an unmitigatedly reactionary regime. The problem remains, however. If, as is likely, the "14 families" refuse to surrender power without a fight, what will Washington do? According to *The Economist,* San Salvador's archbishop has virtually "endorsed the idea of an armed uprising," though from other reports he still hopes for peaceful change. El Salvador may test who's running American foreign policy—the Jimmy Carter of 1976 or Henry Kissinger.

FOOTNOTE ON TITO

Marshal Tito led a resistance movement, made a revolution, forged a nation. In the days to come, he will be compared with other revolutionary nation-makers of the century, with Ho Chi Minh, for instance, or Mao. Tito's positive achievements are outlined elsewhere in this issue. But like the work of Ho and Mao, Tito's had a grim and shadowed side. Revolutions and nations are almost always born bloody, and only the absolute pacifist has a certain response to that fact. The rest of us must go by cases. By no account can all the cases of Tito's use of arms, execution, and imprisonment be justified. Even where they might be, there is no gain in forgetting the suffering that was engendered. When the world pauses to mark the deeds of some Great Man, it is always advisable to remember the many little, and some not so little, individuals who paid for that greatness.

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The Küng affair

TALENT TO SPARE?

REFLECTIONS OF A SOMETIME CRITIC

AMONG THE REASONS given for the Vatican's withdrawal of Professor Hans Küng's authorization to teach as a Catholic theologian two are particularly mentioned: That his writings and teaching "cause confusion among the faithful" and that they "depart from the full integrity of Catholic teaching."

Personally, I do not wish to defend or justify all the utterances made or steps taken by Hans Küng—he is a controversial, discomforting, and provocative theologian. Nonetheless I do wonder whether the conclusions drawn were "unavoidable," and whether "there was no longer any other way out," especially since the furor around Küng had died down.

1. Alongside the faithful who feel themselves made uneasy by Küng, one cannot overlook the extremely large number of those who have found an authentic support to their faith in Küng's books, especially *On Being a Christian* and *Does God Exist?* They have been strengthened in their faith and have found a new and credible approach to its understanding and assimilation. These two books have become a genuine and precious treasure for many pastors, religious educators, and preachers—that is especially true if one reads what is written instead of constantly looking for what is missing!

2. Through word and writing Küng reaches people in general and Christians who are situated on the fringes of the churches, who have distanced themselves from the Christian faith, and who take a critical stance toward the church—people who hardly take notice of church proclamations. When such people read Küng's books—how many is indicated by the hundreds of thousands of copies printed—they obviously do not do so in order to take final leave of their faith and church, but rather to find a way to reestablish contact with the reality of their faith. Has Küng not given many the courage to believe in God and to be a Christian? Has he not provided many motives and arguments for "why one should remain in the church"?

How will all these people react to the measures taken against Küng? Will *they* not be confused and dismayed? Can one dismiss this question with the remark sometimes heard: let them go, good riddance! Can the Catholic church do this, committed as it is since Vatican II—the greatest event in its recent history—to the task of dialogue, encounter, and open approach to humanity, to the whole world?

3. The open, discomforting, and critical questions which Küng poses—to be sure, at times aggressively and importunately—were not invented by him; he simply calls existing problems by their names. And he is of the indisputably correct opinion that questions will not be answered by silence and prohibitions.

4. Should one be glad or irritated that, for example, Küng gave a lecture on the question of God in Peking, that his book *Does God Exist?* is translated, read, and discussed in Russia—and not to strengthen atheism, but to treat it critically and to open doors to faith? Is Küng here not performing a pastoral and missionary service—as a witness of the faith?

5. Küng's interpretation of the infallibility of the church's teaching office as it was formulated at Vatican I in 1870 has been particularly criticized. I myself wrote an essay critical of Küng's interpretation in the volume edited by Karl Rahner on the problem of infallibility. Nevertheless, the following should be noted: if the initiative of Pope John Paul II should lead to intensive conversations with the Orthodox, if the pope hopes that unity with the churches of the East will come to pass by the beginning of the next millennium, then the themes which were formulated at Vatican I will have to undergo an inquiry even more thoroughgoing than Küng's. Vatican I divides the church of the East from the church of the West to this very day.

6. Has the church become so narrow and anxiety-ridden that—despite many justified criticisms—it can no longer accept the theologian Hans Küng as a theologian? And is the same church so prodigally rich in talent and theologians whose voices are heard throughout the whole world that it can without hesitation afford to dispense with Hans Küng?

HEINRICH FRIES

(Father Heinrich Fries is emeritus Professor of Catholic Dogmatic Theology and Director of the Ecumenical Institute at the University of Munich. Translated by Leonard Swidler, Temple University, Philadelphia.)

Eurocommunism

PRO-SOVIET THROWBACK

THE FRENCH DISCONNECTION

IN 1968, THE SOVIET intervention in Czechoslovakia elicited virtually unanimous condemnation from the Communist parties of Western Europe; the Soviet intrusion in Afghanistan, however, has brought forth mixed reactions. What makes for the difference is that many of the parties must now cope with declining prospects, rising concern over the validity of political strategies, and an abruptly changed international climate.

The most pro-Soviet of all, the Portuguese, have reacted in predictable fashion. Equally in character has been the forthright condemnation by the Italians. The somewhat muted disapproval of the Spaniards is in line with a recent softening of their highly critical attitude towards the Russians. The behavior of the French Communist party (PCF) has been the most surprising, not so much for the pro-Soviet stand it adopted—it had been moving in this direction for some time—as for the extremely provocative manner it chose to make its position public.

On January 7, shortly after the appearance of Russian tanks

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in the streets of Kabul, Georges Marchais, PCF general secretary, visited Moscow and was given red carpet treatment including a cordial reunion with Brezhnev. It was the first time since 1974 that Marchais had come to Moscow, bringing to an end five years of acrimonious relations with the Russians. Obviously the party leadership opted for a dramatic symbolic gesture to signal its return to neo-Stalinist orthodoxy and to eliminate what little chance remains for Socialist leader François Mitterand to defeat incumbent Giscard d'Estaing in the 1981 presidential election. In utilizing this singular occasion to effect a reconciliation with the Russians, the PCF provided Moscow with sorely needed support at a time of almost universal opprobrium.

These actions also constitute a French repudiation of the Eurocommunist outlook that continues to be the central guiding doctrine of its Spanish and Italian counterparts. The French defection from Eurocommunist ranks casts a pall over attempts to fashion a European democratic Marxist approach as separate and distinct from its oppressive Russian version—another gain for the USSR.

The decision to return to a pro-Soviet outlook and doctrinal orthodoxy reflects the siege mentality of those who direct PCF affairs. The French Socialist resurgence of recent years has displaced the Communists as the principal party of the Left, and the leadership is determined to reverse this relationship at all costs. What better means than to sharpen differences between the two parties through a return to pro-Sovietism and to make it more difficult for the Socialist Party to attract sufficient Communist votes to its presidential candidate in 1981. Moscow, incidentally, also prefers the re-election of conservative Giscard d'Estaing instead of Socialist Mitterand. Furthermore, dalliance with Eurocommunist ideas and a loosening of authoritarian internal control has only brought the PCF lessened electoral appeal and increased questioning of official policies by the party faithful.

The 1968 Czech intervention had a catalytic effect on pluralizing forces within the European Communist movement. Further progress by the various parties dictated a jettisoning of support of Soviet foreign policy. It became too costly politically to remain identified with the harsh repressive measures taken against Soviet dissidents and Jews. Independence from Moscow and the espousal of democratic pluralism became paying propositions.

But Eurocommunism has not proved to be a "quick fix." For the Italians, of course, there is no feasible alternative to Eurocommunist strategy. On the other hand, in Portugal, a country bearing a greater resemblance to a third-world nation than industrialized Europe, pro-Sovietism is not viewed as an obstacle to the party's continued progress. The French have abandoned their faint-hearted flirtation with Eurocommunism as counter-productive, while the Spanish leadership, faced with uncertain prospects and under attack from dissident elements encouraged by the Russians, has become more cautious in its dealings with Moscow.

The Afghan invasion comes at a difficult time for the Communist parties. Eurocommunism has been one of the more interesting and hopeful products of lowered tensions in international relations. An extended period of renewed confrontation between the super-powers is likely to have an adverse effect on such a heartening development. A leading Spanish political figure recently observed that prolonged East-West tensions would force the Communist party in his country to adopt a more pro-Soviet orientation. Increased Soviet influence in such parties not only poses a serious threat to the continued viability of Eurocommunism, it would also endanger the precarious political balances that subsist in much of Western Europe.

BENJAMIN MARTIN

(Benjamin Martin is co-editor of the recently published Labor Relations in Advanced Industrial Societies: Issues and Problems. *He is currently working on a study of Labor Relations in post-Franco Spain.)*

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

THE EXECUTIONER'S SONG

MAILER'S BEST IN YEARS

IN THE OPENING line of Norman Mailer's *An American Dream* there is a casual link between John F. Kennedy and F. Scott Fitzgerald. It's a great throwaway beginning which sets a tone, like "Call me Ishmael." That linkage of history and fiction shows up in the rest of the novel, and in Mailer's later journalism. He is obsessed with power and prestige and good and evil, and with making choices that matter morally—morality here having to do with specific rightness, being true to the moment, a working out of Mailer's unique version of "existentialism." His journalism is full of this concern: he sees himself doing things, cleverly and stupidly, sneaking cleverly (for example) into the Republican convention disguised as a guard, and stupidly approaching Sonny Liston with good advice on boxing. Mailer's journalism, and much of his fiction, was full of Mailer or Mailer substitutes.

It was good stuff, because Mailer simply does see things which nobody else notices. But about some things his most recent approach wouldn't work, the way he has taken on of describing his own reactions in third person form, with some fancy name like "Aquarius" standing in for Mailer: "Seabiscuit could sense his own failure here, charged with the tang of ammonia which follows sudden unexpected exertion, or the glue-factory smell of a losing race-horse led away..."—

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people began to parody it. The third-person device was a means of keeping in shape for novels, maybe, and it made for some fine journalism. But it wouldn't work close to some subjects, and when I saw that *Playboy* was excerpting something from a book by Mailer on the execution of Gary Gilmore I imagined a third-person Mailer under another name trying to figure out how he felt about a person getting shot. It promised to be a tasteless thing, brilliant and low.

A friend sent me a copy of *The Executioner's Song*. I began to read it before going to work one morning, and by the middle of the day I resented the work and family obligations which kept me from it. As most reviewers have pointed out, there is a remarkable self-effacement here: Mailer vanishes, to let the book appear. It isn't that Mailer's own concerns don't surface in *The Executioner's Song*—what other modern American writer could write, "Gilmore had also felt compelled to take a chance with his life. Gilmore had been keeping in touch with something it was indispensable to be in touch with." Certainly Gilmore fascinates Mailer for reasons that are as personal as they could be. But comparisons of Mailer with previous Mailer can distract us from seeing how faithful this book is to the way people really talk. If future readers want to know how Americans sounded in the 1970s they can come to this book. In some recorded interviews with Mailer you can hear his accent change, from clipped careful Mailer to Southern to east-coast Irish American, as if he can't help tailoring his emotions to the rhythms which he thinks will handle the feeling best. His ear for the way Americans talk is clean, and what can seem flat for pages, the plain speech you hear in the midwest and west, can rise suddenly to wonderful moments. There is not too much apparent self-consciousness in this handling of the American language; it seems nearly effortless, but it is the most impressive thing about the book.

The Executioner's Song is also a remarkably compassionate work. Mailer got to know a lot of the people and families he writes about, and they appear here as full people. The Mormon families whose lives were torn open by Gilmore's murders are decent people whose hopes were modest and good, and Mailer is able to write about them without condescension. What I mean by that is the tendency of some writers who deal with criminality to see in the victims a naiveté or smugness of stuffy respectability which draws violence, almost justifiably. What Mailer shows us is the horror which occurs when decent people happen on a man like Gilmore at the wromg moment. But Mailer is also fair to Gilmore and Nicole, Gilmore's lover, and this romance—exploitative, manipulative, also complicated and true—is the center of the book.

Despite the dark subject, or maybe because of it, there are funny moments. When Larry Schiller (who had the "rights" to Gilmore's story and in fact got Mailer involved in writing the book) wanted to reproduce Gilmore's prison letters to Nicole, full of sex and art education, he worried about the sort of machine he might find to do the job most efficiently, and phoned from Provo to Denver's Xerox headquarters to locate one, "when damn if they didn't tell him that right in Provo, the Press Publishing Company had just a machine. Right in fucking Provo. A Christmas card company. Schiller shook his head. Sometimes these things happen.

"Obviously he was not going to tell a Christmas card company that Gary Gilmore was what he intended to use their machine for...,"

Mailer has been criticized for not being more specific within the pages of this book about his relationship with Schiller. He has pointed out, rightly I think, that his relationship with Schiller and his work on the book began after Gilmore's execution. And Schiller certainly doesn't come off as well as some of Mailer's critics have implied. When Mailer has Schiller thinking of Gilmore's letters to Nicole, "must be tons of meat and potatoes in those envelopes," we know Mailer isn't writing about Francis of Assisi.

I do have a couple of problems with the book. It is about existing people— not imagined people, like Raskolnikov; the people in *The Executioner's Song* aren't inventions. As real as a novelist's characters are, they are the author's work and are his sole responsibility, an act of imagination. But Nicole, whose sadness and lovemaking and suicide attempts are all described here, is a person who was around before this book and will be forced one way or another to deal with it, as will the relatives, victims' families, friends, lawyers, etc., who are made part of this book. I believe that Mailer has been compassionate and probably fair—but how will they feel about seeing themselves revealed this way?

This is, of course, not an artistic question, but it leads to one. How much of what people understand about Gary Gilmore will be filtered through Mailer's reworking of Gilmore's letters and his fascination with Gilmore's obvious intelligence? This problem of reworking, deletion, and selection is as true of any reporting as it is of "true life novels" (the book's subtitle), but it is still a problem, especially when the mind at work is allowed to rewrite Gilmore to the novelist's satisfaction. People doing straight reporting, not a hybrid of fiction and reporting, are forced to worry about this, and the worry is not unimportant. Gilmore didn't want to be represented as insane, and Mailer is fair to him here: he shows him as a man who was not crazy, whose life was limited, driven, and terrible, but not insane. (Insanity can be a consoling word for the rest of us.) He killed the decent men he killed because the alternative that day would have been to kill Nicole. In *The Stranger* Camus tried to handle the same sort of incident without reducing it to comfortable, manageable dimensions. By making the letters a little better than they were, Mailer may be backing away from Gilmore's reality; the impression is that he must be made to look more interesting than the con he was. I can see the novelist's reasons for wanting the prison letters to be better, but whoever Gary Gilmore was begins to blur with the alteration.

Still, it doesn't matter to me if what I encounter here is Mailer's Gilmore and not history's. This is the best thing Mailer has done in years, and considering the good books he has given us that's saying a lot. JOHN GARVEY

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THE SYNOD IN ROME WAS NO DUTCH TREAT

Will it sell in Utrecht?

JOHN A. COLEMAN

AN ARTICLE which appeared in the French newspaper, *Le Monde*, some weeks before the recently completed Dutch bishops' synod engaged in a game of national character types: "The French know how to discover the truth; Germans analyze and defend it. The Americans know how to package the truth and the Dutch make sure it gets into the public media."

By almost any standard, the recent Dutch bishops' synod in Rome was typically un-Dutch. The usual openness and cordial relations with the press—a stance dictated by the vigorous, extensive, and autonomously lay-controlled network of Catholic media in the Netherlands—were replaced by the utmost secrecy. Vatican skirmishes first forbade, then allowed stringently limited access to the synod to H. Kowenhoven, press secretary for the Dutch episcopal conference. Through some still unexplained process, Bishop Albert Deschamps, Honorary Rector of Louvain and, most recently, a judge in the Roman curial proceedings investigating Edward Schillebeeckx's orthodoxy as well as a visiting professor at reactionary Dutch Bishop Jan Gijsen's seminary in Rolduc, was added at the last minute to the secretariat of the synod alongside the previously announced moderate, Louvain professor J. Lescrauwaet.

Two hours after returning to the country at the completion of the synod, Utrecht's John Cardinal Willebrands complained in an open meeting with his diocesan pastoral council that press reports of the synod were irresponsibly one-sided. What kind of code of responsibility, however, could he credibly urge on journalists who were kept unaccustomedly in the dark and fed bland and unenlightening résumés of daily discussions?

For months before the synod, the persistent complaint of group after group, in public gatherings or in a weekly feature of the Catholic newsmagazine, *De Tijd*, entitled, "What I Expect From the Synod," was captured in the slogan, "They are making decisions about us and for us but over our heads without any consultation with us." At the synod, the bishops of the church which was aptly described in the January, 1980 issue of *Informations Catholiques Internationales* as "the privileged locale of co-responsibility and adult lay initiative" turned their backs on both by opting for a highly clerical, one-sidedly hierarchical pyramid model of authority, jurisdiction and charism. The Dutch bishops alone among their countrymen seem to have exhibited any enthusiasm for the final synodal document containing forty-six directives mandating far-reaching changes. Dutch Catholic and Protestant press reaction has been uniformly negative, if not pessimistic and despairing.

Make no mistake about it. The Dutch synod represents drastic surgery, an abrupt about-face on twenty years of institutional development and the capitulation of the Dutch episcopacy to Rome. Any seasoned reader of the letters of the Dutch bishops over the past twenty years will read the synodal document with the growing incredulity of an Isaac: "The signers are the Dutch episcopacy indeed but the voice is the voice of another: the Roman curia and Roman theology." Throughout the synod, Pope John Paul II noted that the deliberations were of importance to the whole world church. In what follows I want to sort out what I think is the significance of the synod for Dutch Catholicism and what for the world church.

Because of unique sociological conditions, the Dutch church—whatever the canon law—is primarily a national church and, only secondarily, a diocesan entity. The compactness of the country, its fabric of national Catholic organizations (schools, charity organizations, political party, labor union, news media etc.), its inter-twined and mobile network of church professionals—all these demand an especially close and collegial cooperation among the Dutch bishops. As wags put it, "If a bishop sneezes in Groningen you will feel its reverberations in Roermond." That collegial collaboration—an expected part of the Dutch landscape at least since 1945—broke down in 1971 and 1972 when Rome named a conserva-

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tive, Adriann Sinonis, as bishop of Rotterdam and an arch-reactionary, Jan Gijsen, as bishop of Roermond.

Gijsen, particularly, has been the open sore on the Dutch episcopacy. Over the years he has effectively withdrawn his diocese from almost every national commission for the liturgy, catechesis, theological training, overseas mission work and ecumenism. Since it is not fashionable to use psychological models drawn from pathology to describe members of the episcopacy, few say openly in print what almost everyone in the Netherlands says to one another in conversation and I, for one, credit: Bishop Gijsen is not a stable or psychologically well man. The problem is that influential members of the Roman curia have staked their reputation on his appointment. *Bella figura*!

Meanwhile, on issue after issue which have come before the Dutch public—from ecumenical cooperation to a pastoral approach to the Catholic homosexual or the Catholic divorced-remarried, the advisability of pastoral councils and the moral responsibility of Catholic politicians to determine for themselves the concrete common good on specific legislation regarding abortion—Gijsen has publicly repudiated his fellow bishops and, in several nationally featured interviews, insinuated that his fellow bishops are disobedient rebels. Clearly, the final synodal document had him uniquely in mind when it asserts in paragraph 14, section B that a bishop should "abstain from declarations which could harm a confrere in the episcopacy."

Feelings about Gijsen run extraordinarily high in the Netherlands. I recognized their intensity five years ago when I held extensive field interviews with all of the diocesan vicars and middle-level members of the national church bureaucracy for my book, *The Evolution of Dutch Catholicism*. Although I purposely refrained from asking any questions about Gijsen, indeed assiduously avoided even mentioning his name, every middle-level national or diocesan administrator, without exception, in every diocese except Gijsen's own, heatedly asserted during the interview: "Gijsen is the problem!"

THERE IS abundant longitudinal sociological evidence about Dutch Catholicism, in part due to a national Catholic bureau of statistics and in part to periodic surveys conducted by the Netherlands Institute of Public Opinion. This evidence makes clear that Gijsen's constituency can be reckoned at circa 5-10 percent of the population. Surveys show that 88 percent of the Dutch Catholics have confidence in the prudent moderate experimentation and collegial style of the Dutch progressives. Unfortunately, however, there have been few bridges of compromise between the majority Dutch Catholic position and the intransigent conservatives who follow Gijsen's lead. Unfortunately, also, the Roman curia allied itself closely and openly during the past decade with the traditionalist camp.

The Dutch are, perhaps, too hyper-sensitive about Rome, even to a fault. Nevertheless, enough well-documented stories (alongside the exaggerations) have appeared in the Dutch media in the past fifteen years to make any Dutchman at least cautious, if not suspicious, about Roman comprehension of Dutch sociological realities, if not also of Roman intentions.

When communications between the members of the Dutch episcopacy finally irretrievably broke down and the polarizations of a decade or more standing grew intense, the Dutch bishops, themselves, came up with the idea of a unique national synod to be held in Rome together with the pope and selected members of the Roman curia. Despite utopian speculations from various camps, it was clear from the outset that no bishop, including Gijsen, would be removed from his see. Instead, the so-called Cardinal Baggio plan was launched which foresees the splitting of current dioceses or the naming of auxiliary bishops so as to expand the current seven to approximately thirteen bishops.

By the time this article appears, the basic decisions of the Dutch synod will be already known: (1) a re-evaluation of Dutch Theological Centers to guarantee they are firmly under episcopal control and that all married former priests are removed from their faculties (Seemingly, laicized former priests do not have the rights of the ordinary laity); (2) The institution of what the document refers to as "true seminaries" for each diocese; (3) a re-evaluation of lay ministers to insure they do not have "a permanent function of global scope" and that their distinction from ordained ministers is manifest; (4) a re-evaluation of catechesis which will be based on the General Catechetical Directory and Roman documents.

It should also be public knowledge from the news reports that Bishop Gijsen had to make various minor concessions at the synod such as an agreement to rejoin his fellow bishops in the area of the Pontifical Missionary Works, the Lenten collection and the Dutch Missionary Week (Gijsen objected to the linkage of evangelization to development programs). Moreover, his traditionalist seminary will undergo collective episcopal scrutiny. Despite these concessions, most Dutch Catholics greeted the synodal results with a jaundiced remark which noted that Queen Juliana announced her resignation from the throne on the same day that the synod ended: "Juliana has abdicated but Gijsen continues to rule!"

Knowing that the complexion of Dutch theologians and the corps of religious professionals is overwhelmingly moderate to progressive, I asked a Dutch religious journalist friend where the bishops would find able and willing collaborators to aid in their operation of self-destruction of the collegial church. After a long pause and several hesitant aahs, he replied, "That is, of course, the question!"

LIMITATIONS of space preclude any detailed exegetical analysis of the final synodal document to substantiate my kafka-esque impression that the Dutch bishops signed a document diametrically opposed to the collegial church they have spent twenty years in building. Several points, however, bear noting.

One-sided attention to the church as communion, the focus of the synod agenda, is always potentially heretical. Both communion and mission are equally constitutive and simultaneously given marks of the church. The community is gathered in and for its sending. It does not, in any way,

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pre-exist as *Christian* community and, then, only subsequently engage in mission. Rather, Pentecost (the gathering-sending is simultaneous) is the birthday of the church. The community exists *for* the world as a sacrament of possibility, hope and healing for this concretely given sinful world.

One of the current heretical tendencies in Roman Catholic thought is the attempt to isolate and separate inner-church and church-world models. This false separation is the root cause of the lack of both credibility and cogency in church pronouncements on justice, women, human community and the right to participation which are applied only *ad extra*. More to the point, it effectively submerged the pastoral and missionary vision of the church which informs the governing style of the Dutch pastoral bishops such as Den Bosch's Bluyssen and Breda's Ernst. You cannot—as the synod attempted to do—discuss the appropriate pastoral response for the Dutch church without careful attention to Dutch political, social, cultural and structural realities. Otherwise, you end up, as the final document does, with abstract notions of revelation, charism and authority. This abstract ahistorical approach reveals the clear signature of Roman theology.

The bishops treat of revelation in paragraphs 4-6 of their document. It is understood as something primarily "objective" with a clear ahistorical content, interpreted by the magisterium. I miss the insistence that revelation unites the subjectivity of the faith response of the human person with the transcendent presence of God, that revelation is always salvational, always existential, always addressed to concrete hearers of the word in a definite language, place and time. How wonderful if revelation were so obvious as the document seems to suggest. There would be no longer any need for hermeneutics.

If Pope John XXIII was correct in distinguishing between the transcendent norm of faith and the formulas which express it and in insisting that the latter are always to a large extent the product of a definite culture, then the bishops can not separate, as they do in paragraph #5, "the content of revelation" from the hearers of the word. To preach revelation in time-bound formulae is a near guarantee that it will not be heard or that it will be misunderstood. At the very least a massive knowledge of the history of philosophy and theology seems necessary to understand centuries-old formulae correctly. I would suggest that the writers of the synod document would have been helped if they had consulted the letter of the Dutch Bishops to Cardinal Ottaviani in 1966 where the bishops averred that "the faithful who do not understand what the ancient formulas mean find precisely in the new formulas the ancient unchangeable faith. If we shall try to hold the line against this development that will entail a disaster for the faithful and could lead many, once again, to leave the church."

The synod document insists in paragraph #3 that "neither the bishops nor priests are delegates of the faithful but are ministers of Jesus Christ at the service of the ecclesial community." No one can take exception to this claim and—to the best of my knowledge—no one in the Netherlands ever has. What is strange, however, is the way the document slips into assumptions that priests are delegates of the bishops (cf. paragraph 24 with its paternalistic model of the bishop as "father" to priestly sons and the curious warning against any independent association of priests). Moreover, the document pointedly omits the assertion that "the faithful are not delegates of the bishops nor priests but are ministers of Jesus Christ at the service of the ecclesial community."

Roman theology has generally had difficulty in conceptualizing any independent element in the church. Rather, it sees every agent in the church—from pope through bishop to priest and layman—as subordinate and dependent upon the purposes of the whole. Incumbents of roles within the church are all seen, in different positions within the hierarchical pyramid, as agents of the church. Lower agents in the hierarchy are dependent upon higher agents who more perfectly embody the system's purposes. Unfortunately, the charism of baptism has a way of puncturing holes in this model of pyramidal authority. This pyramid model can be contrasted with a collegial model where hierarchy is acknowledged as essential to the constitution of the church, indeed, but as subordinate to the basic unity of the body and in dialogue with independent charisms which do not flow from orders or office. One wonders whether the authors of the synodal document ever read the remarkable brochure-length Christmas letter of the Dutch episcopacy written in 1960 where this collegial model is brilliantly set out.

The synod document, of course, does not deserve careful scrutiny. It is a mish-mash, theologically inconsistent and incoherent and filled with the strangest juxtapositions such as the one in paragraph 32 where the issue of the emotional integration of celibate members of religious orders is treated. Stark choices are posited between St. John and St. Paul's concern for "a love for God and for Christ, in the Spirit, which can contribute greatly to integrate the need for affection in fraternal love" and a "third way lived as an ambiguous state between celibacy and marriage." Surely, there are many more intermediate (and one would hope more illuminating) points on this continuum!

The world church will watch very closely the deliberations of the episcopal commission set up to determine the respective pastoral tasks of the priest, deacon and lay pastoral worker called for in paragraphs 35-36 of the document. The difficulties of making precise demarcations on this point at this moment in history are obvious. The theology of ministry is still in process of being developed. Moreover, the shortage of clerical and celibate priests as well as a new appreciation of the lay charism have led many churches—besides the Netherlands one thinks of the church in Latin America and Africa and, increasingly, the United States—to experiment with new forms of lay ministry to meet real and pressing pastoral needs. The danger will be that the desire for a clarity on the character of ordination as opposed to lay calls to ministry might lead the prelates to forget the ancient dictum of sacramental theology, *Sacramenta sunt propter hominem*, i.e., the sacraments exist for the good and the need of the concrete human person.

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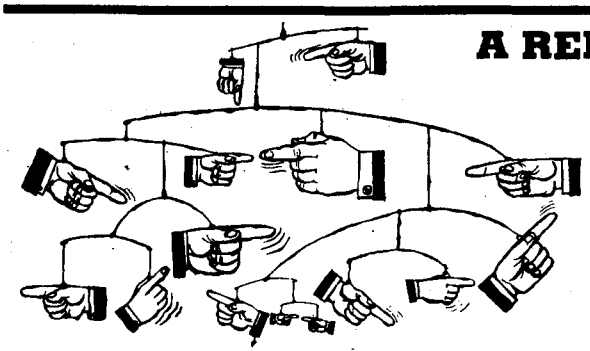
Similarly, canon law proclaims a right of the laity to receive the sacraments. In the present climate of shortage of celibate priests in the Netherlands (and elsewhere), this right can not be honored without utilizing lay pastoral workers.

Paragraph 36 shows that there are fears in Rome that granting the laity "a permanent function of global scope" runs the risk of "the creation of a parallel clergy which would be presented as an alternative to the priesthood and the diaconate." To the best of my knowledge, however, the declines in candidates for the celibate priesthood pre-date, worldwide, any new experimentation with lay ministry. The tone of paragraph 36 shows a curious conflation between the two notions of "office" and "ministry" which neglects the theology of charisms which are not bound to office or ordination. One would surmise that they represent a rather extensive set.

In the end, of course, the Dutch bishops must try to sell their people and co-workers in the ministry on their new-found vision of a pyramid structure for the church. It will not be easy after twenty years of episcopal inculcation of an alternative view of the church. If my assessment of Dutch Catholicism is at all valid, it will be a well-nigh impossible task. At any rate, I hope the Dutch bishops fare better than the Orthodox bishops who returned, in euphoria, from the Council of Florence to Armenia, Byzantium and Greece with the glad tidings of a new-found communion with Rome. As I recall my history, their people greeted them with stones!



A REPLY TO ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.

The CIA & the president

THOMAS POWERS

INTERESTED READERS will recall that in the last issue of *Commonweal* Arthur Schlesinger Jr. had many critical things to say about my book on Richard Helms and the Central Intelligence Agency, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*. Some of Mr. Schlesinger's claims, alas, are true. But the drift of his criticisms was that I had got the main thing wrong, and had failed to understand the nature of the relationship between presidents and the CIA. Mr. Schlesinger argues that far from being an obedient servant of the White House, the CIA is a kind of "rogue elephant" (in Senator Frank Church's phrase), not just secretive about operational details—which it certainly is—but fully capable of mounting a major operation on its own, for its own reasons. More particularly, Mr. Schlesinger argues that the CIA attempted to assassinate Fidel Castro without the knowledge, much less the authority, of President John F. Kennedy. These claims, I think, are not true.

The point is an important one. An intelligence service is a double-edged weapon. The secrecy which can make it effective abroad also shields it from scrutiny at home. In addition, intelligence services are instruments of power in its rawest form, and they tend to know the worst that can be said of the men who give them orders. Thus armed with secret knowledge, and experienced in conspiracy, intelligence services are in an ideal position to aspire to independence, and even to rule.

This is not something which happens only in spy novels. J. Edgar Hoover ran the FBI for fifty years because presidents did not want to run the risk of trying to fire him. In the Soviet Union, where the KGB and its predecessors have been principal organs of state control, no less than three intelligence chiefs have been murdered by their colleagues in government since 1917. Clearly, things have never gone so far in this country, but the danger is nonetheless real and one goal of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities, headed by Senator Church, was to determine if the CIA was a rogue elephant beyond control. In the end Senator Church concluded that it was not, but of course Church might be wrong, and Mr. Schlesinger right.

By the nature of its work an intelligence service is bound to be autonomous when it comes to operational matters, and the CIA has been no exception. It has been jealous of the identity of its agents, reluctant to admit how heavily it depends on liaison with foreign intelligence services, protective of its own in bureaucratic squabbles, and often lacking in candor about some of its local allies. The files of the National Security Council are filled with White House grumbling about opaque CIA paperwork, just as the files of the State Department are filled with ambassadorial protests against highhanded local CIA stations stirring up trouble with their aggressive pursuit of agents, or propaganda outlets, or telephone lines into Soviet bloc embassies. Perhaps the most chronic official complaint over the last thirty years has focused on the CIA's tendency to expand programs beyond proportion, and perpetuate them forever, like the broom in the tale of the Sorcerer's Apprentice. Intelligence services are notoriously prickly in their relations with the other branches of government; they elude oversight

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when they can, engage in whispering campaigns, fall back on secrecy as an argument of last resort. "Ah, if only we could say . . ."

All this is true, but it does not mean that the CIA has been off on its own since 1947, pursuing its own policies for its own reasons in contemptuous disregard of presidential authority. Of that there is no evidence. Presidents are jealous guardians of their power in foreign affairs; they have been content to give the CIA a great deal of leeway in running its own show, but none of them has tolerated—or been faced with—the least rebellion when it came to the goals or major undertakings of American foreign policy. One can go down the list of presidential preoccupations since 1945—France and Italy in the 1940s, Iran in 1953, Guatemala in 1954, Indonesia in 1958, the Congo, Cuba, Southeast Asia, Chile: every last one of them received the full attention of presidents and their advisors. These things were not always handled wisely or well, but no president could claim anything like ignorance of what was going on. Not even Mr. Schlesinger, in his book *The Imperial Presidency*, has argued that presidents were lacking in the power to set their own priorities, or were backward about doing so.

IN ITS STUDY of the covert operations conducted by the CIA the Church Committee focused, in exhausting detail, on Indonesia, Cuba, and Chile. In all three cases the Committee found that presidents and their advisors had pressed the CIA relentlessly for results. In every instance CIA complaints were the same: they were being pressed to do too much, too quickly, by men with too little understanding of what really might be accomplished by covert action. In the case of Indonesia the Church Committee decided not to publish its report, because the CIA argued against exposing yet another operation in such detail, and because the pattern of presidential control was as clear as it was with regard to Cuba and Chile. There has been little talk of rogue elephants since the Church Committee concluded its work.

None of these operations was supervised more closely, or was more heavily dependent on the use of violence, than Operation MONGOOSE, initiated by President Kennedy after the disaster at the Bay of Pigs with the clear and single goal of getting rid of Castro. President Kennedy appointed his brother, then the Attorney General, as his special representative on the high-level group which directed the CIA's effort to disrupt the Cuban economy, build an underground, and create "boom and bang" on the island. The Kennedys' intense personal interest in MONGOOSE was abundantly established by the Church Committee. In addition to regular attendance at the oversight committee's meetings, Robert Kennedy frequently telephoned CIA officers involved in operational details, called in two heads of the clandestine service (Richard Bissell and Richard Helms) to read them the riot act, and even dealt directly with anti-Castro Cubans on his own.

But despite the Kennedys' insistent pressure, the plan was a total failure. A random few targets destroyed in sabotage operations, and a good many people were killed by both sides, but Castro was as firmly in power at the end of MONGOOSE as he had been at the beginning. The main reason for the failure was the Kennedys' attempt to do secretly with the CIA what could really only be done openly with an army.

All this was established by the Church Committee, and has been corroborated and expanded upon by other writers. It is far from being a proud episode in the Kennedys' personal history, as Mr. Schlesinger recognizes. The lack of a plausible strategy for Castro's removal, and the resort to a kind of aimless commando violence in its absence, gave the whole operation a decidedly unpleasant, even vindictive air. But worst was the CIA's attempts to poison Castro with the aide of Cuban allies recruited for the job by the Mafia. This operation, the outgrowth of an earlier, similar attempt which began under President Eisenhower, never got very far but it was pushed energetically and, at least from the CIA's point of view was an integral part of the broader attempt to remove Castro. The question which remains, left hanging for want of conclusive evidence by the Church Committee, was whether either or both of the Kennedy brothers knew of the plots, or authorized them.

Mr. Schlesinger might have argued that the assassination attempts were mounted by the CIA on its own as being within the limits of its traditional operational freedom. But Mr. Schlesinger instinctively, and I think correctly, recognizes this would be stretching matters. The assassination of a foreign leader is the sort of thing no properly responsible intelligence service would undertake without authority. Since the CIA certainly did make the attempt, we must conclude that it did so on its own, in the manner of a rogue elephant, or that President Kennedy knew about and authorized the plots. There does not seem to be room for any other interpretation of the facts. But in taking the rogue elephant position Mr. Schlesinger has given himself an uphill battle. His best defense would be to cite numerous examples of major operations undertaken by the CIA on its own, thus establishing a pattern of freewheeling independence. He cites none. Robert S. McNamara, secretary of defense during Kennedy's administration, told the Church Committee he had known nothing of any plot to murder Castro, but he was also at pains to emphasize that "the CIA was a highly disciplined organization, fully under the control of senior officials of the government. . . .I know of no major action taken by the CIA during the time I was in the govern-

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ment that was not properly authorized. . . . I just can't understand how it could have happened . . .'' (*Assassination Report*, p. 158). If the Agency's past behavior were the only evidence we had in this matter, we would have to conclude—albeit tentatively, in the absence of certain knowledge—that the CIA probably had authority to proceed as it did. But it is not the only evidence.

The responsible CIA officials who testified before the Church Committee—in particular Richard Bissell and Richard Helms—tried to have it both ways. Neither man said he had received explicit orders to kill Castro; both indicated they felt they had all the authority they needed, and that Robert Kennedy in particular (in Helms's words) ''would not have been unhappy if he [Castro] had disappeared off the scene by whatever means'' (*Assassination Report*, p. 151). In the absence of more explicit written evidence, this left the Church Committee in a quandary. Other evidence, cited by the Church Committee in varying contexts, demonstrates that the Kennedys were certainly thinking about the assassination of Castro and knew the CIA was thinking about it too, although it does not establish when and where—or if—the orders were given.

In late March or early April, 1961, shortly before the Bay of Pigs invasion, President Kennedy asked his friend Senator George Smathers how he would respond to the assassination of Castro. After Kennedy himself was murdered, Smathers described the conversation in an interview for the oral history collection of the Kennedy Library. ''I don't know whether he brought it up. We had further conversation of assassination of Fidel Castro, what would be the reaction. . . . As I recollect he was just throwing out a great barrage of questions—he was certain it could be accomplished—I remember that—it would be no problem. . . . At this particular time I felt, and I later on learned that he did, that I wasn't so much for the idea of assassination, particularly when it could be pinned on the United States.'' (Quoted in Richard J. Walton, *Cold War and Counterrevolution*, p. 48.)

Early that fall, during a meeting at the White House, both Kennedy brothers ''chewed out'' Bissell for failing to get Castro. When Bissell described that meeting to the man who ran his Cuban operation, the man assumed that Bissell had been told to ''get Castro'' by any means necessary, including assassination. Bissell himself told the Church Committee he did not remember this meeting clearly, and that, in any event, the Kennedys had never ordered him to kill Castro. But Bissell's colleagues at the CIA had a different impression from Bissell's report at the time. Thomas Karamessines, later chief of the clandestine service, told me that the Cuban aide's description of what Bissell had told him left no doubt in his—Karamessines's—mind whatever: in September, 1961, the Kennedys gave Bissell all the authority he needed to kill Castro.

Reports of this meeting are in varying degrees of conflict: Bissell says he got no orders, and the people who worked for him say that certainly wasn't what he told them. If it were not for the Kennedys' discussion of Castro's assassination on other occasions, both before and after the September, 1961, meeting, one might conclude that the Kennedys' passion to ''get rid'' of Castro was simply taken too literally by the CIA officers entrusted with the job.

Perhaps the most explicit report of what the Kennedys knew and when they knew it comes from the journalist Tad Szulc, who met with both of them, at their invitation, at the White House in November, 1961. President Kennedy asked Szulc the same question he had asked Smathers the previous April: how would he respond to a proposal for Castro's assassination? Szulc said he would be against it and Kennedy said he felt the same way, but that he was under great pressure by ''advisors'' to order Castro killed—''think he said intelligence people, but not positive,'' Szulc recorded in his notes later that evening.

TWO FINAL PIECES of evidence remain. In May, 1962, Robert Kennedy was briefed about the assassination plot by two CIA officers, Lawrence Houston, the CIA's General Counsel, and Sheffield Edwards, the Director of Security. The circumstances surrounding the briefing are complicated; one of the Mafia figures involved had run afoul of the FBI, and Kennedy wanted to know what connection he had with the CIA. When Houston and Edwards told him—not vaguely, but in great detail—he was furious, a fact which has been cited as proof he didn't know anything about the attempt to kill Castro. Houston told the Church Committee he told Kennedy the plot had been terminated because that was what Edwards had falsely told him. But he also told the Committee that Kennedy was angry about the CIA's reliance on the Mafia, not about the attempts themselves. The Attorney General told Houston ''that if we were going to get involved with Mafia personnel again he wanted to be informed first. . . . I do not remember his commenting about the operation itself'' (*Assassination Report*, p. 133).

The revealing thing to me here is Kennedy's reaction to what he had been told: he did not order an inquiry, did not ask John McCone what this was all about, did not demand to know just who had been behind this in the first place, did not insist on punishment—nor even a reprimand—for those responsible. There was in fact no bureaucratic response whatever. He told the CIA's General Counsel—not its director—he wanted no more use of the Mafia, and that is *all* he told him. This does not sound to me like the response of a man who has just learned the CIA—answerable to his brother—had tried to murder a foreign leader with no authority whatsoever. What it does sound like is a man who knew what had been going on in general, but not in particular, and was angry when he found out.

'Because of the FBI's role in this episode, J. Edgar Hoover learned in detail about the first of the Mafia plots to kill Castro. During a meeting of Hoover and Kennedy a few days after the CIA's briefing, both men remarked on the abysmal judgment shown by the Agency in using the Mafia for such a sensitive undertaking. But Hoover's memo of the meeting does not record any disapproval of assassination *per se* and that October Hoover sent Robert Kennedy a memo saying he had found someone who could kill Castro, and offering to handle

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the job. Whatever Kennedy may have thought of the subject privately, it seems clear he left Hoover with the impression that a really workable plan to kill Castro might be welcome.

Mr. Schlesinger prefaced his criticisms of my book with a declaration of interest, citing his own experience with the OSS during World War II. But he has declared the wrong interest: it is not his background in intelligence which helps to explain his position, but his loyalty to the Kennedys. This does him credit as a man, but gets in his way as an historian. I am not surprised that it should; the likelihood (as it seems to me) that John F. Kennedy was guilty of an attempt to assassinate a man who humiliated him goes beyond the limits of irony. I do not blame Mr. Schlesinger for rebelling against this terrible interpretation of the facts we both know. But it is plain silly for him to suggest that the plots against Castro were only part of an established pattern of freewheeling CIA independence. Of all the defenses of the Kennedys he might have chosen, this is the one least supported by the evidence.

Like Mr. Schlesinger, I do not know exactly what happened here. But the facts are too numerous to be let lie. So far Mr. Schlesinger has ignored them. To me they suggest that President Kennedy was told of the efforts to kill Castro sometime after his election, in the course of a more general briefing on planning for the Bay of Pigs. It seems clear the proposal was a real one in his mind, that he understood its moral dimension, that it troubled and worried him. It is a small irony that much of the evidence about Kennedy's role comes from those to whom he expressed his doubts. But the plans went forward, and were renewed later after a period of dormancy following the Bay of Pigs. It is conceivable that a failure to say no was taken by the CIA as permission to go ahead. At a certain point nuance, implication, and unspoken agreement may become the language of conspiracy. But I think it more likely that Kennedy allowed himself to say yes, shrank back from the details, and then absorbed this seemingly small assent as one more of those awful freedoms which power cannot justify, but allows.

Shelby Stephenson

Coming Out

The hour is a lovely tale,
Heaven, a flight of quail,
Prayer, a patient man.

Redweeds stay the storm in the branch,
Sanded lines where trickles run nowhere
And bottom is ashen as the old house,
Three rooms coming together
Freed from foundations
On winds over the eastern shore.

I turn through a door.
Ashes sit in the hearth.
Smoke blooms roses.

A turning is in this hollow.
I shut my eyes, etch a tree in an orchard of walnuts.
A swing blows in the windhead of spring.

I wander beside the stream,
Roll in warm beds of grass,
Turn the tenderest stems to buds.

My swim is a plunge: the rope-swing moves.
How quiet the startled fish leap
In the grandeur of the water, creeping braids
From me to a tumble of springs
Where lily-pads slip
And the garden is bird-full and rich-throated.

I lie down in breezeless air,
Blow an owl's song
With a fist I shape into a horn,
My fingers closing shut over hand and mouth.
Gently lifting, the sound floats between my eyes.

A sparrow waves on the sill, worm-pleased,
Tail ruffled back toward beak
Curving light from the widening green.

Running into the grass
I gather a boat in my arms
And the frail stars
Cover my body like a net.
I drink good nectar in soft leaves
I cup to hold the juices.

A thrush comes out of the deep.
With stars containing past journeys
I sit along ditches on hills
That remind me of home,
Move through lanes, backlots, paths to sawmills—
Measure the warm distance.

Robert Beum

An Aging Lady

Failing strength . . .
But all the will of April
To blaze forsythia . . .

Not one door
I knew and might have opened
Fades: they tease like the bloom—

Every one I opened
Led here, past strength,
Past choice, to restless April.

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HOW CAN AN AUTHORITARIAN STATE EVOLVE?

The Tito legacy

BOGDAN DENITCH

AS EACH SUCCESSIVE report emphasized the failing state of Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito, the world's attention turned again to the conflicts and changes within the international Communist movement. Tito had contributed massively to the practical dissolution of that movement, its transformation from a monolithic alliance centered on Moscow to a collection of regimes and parties ranging from faithful followers of Soviet orthodoxy to independent parties that regard the Soviet Union as the greatest threat to the socialism they seek to develop. Tito had also played a central role in another transformation—Yugoslavia's unique experiment in the devolution of a totalitarian state and centrally-planned economy into a much more loosely controlled, decentralized, and pluralist society.

All this is the more remarkable given the impeccable orthodoxy of Tito's credentials in the world Communist movement up to World War II. His biography is archetypical for a functionary of the Communist International. But unlike his many counterparts who worked for the International and have run their parties under its imprimatur, Tito led a battle-hardened party that emerged out of a civil war and resistance against the Axis occupiers to take power primarily through its own efforts. When Tito's Partisans marched into Belgrade in September 1944, the pre-war parties and elites were shattered, demoralized, and in good part discredited by open or covert collaboration with the enemy occupiers. By appearing, not only as the victors of a civil war and harbingers of a new social order, but as the major force, if not the only force, which had consistently fought against the enemy invader, this Communist party was able to harness both the forces of social reform and the forces of nationalism on its behalf.

The combination of revolutionary élan with national patriotism and such a party's self-assurance all but guaranteed a break between the Soviets and the one regime in Eastern Europe not totally beholden to them. There were roots of the Tito-Stalin break even during the war itself. The Russians chided their Yugoslav comrades in 1942 with excess zeal, the creation of proletarian brigades, and the wearing of the red stars, rather than the creation of a broad popular front dominated by the party—this zeal might provoke trouble with the Western allies. Moscow probably also feared that the Yugoslav Partisans might suffer the same fate as the Greek Communist Partisans, who found themselves unceremoniously ejected from Athens by British troops allied with former Axis collaborators at the same time that Tito's forces were consolidating state power in Yugoslavia and eliminating the last vestiges of armed nationalist opposition.

The regime which emerged was harder and more orthodox than the other East European regimes. It carried out nationalization and the outlawing of other parties earlier. It found itself in a direct conflict with the Western allies over Trieste and its Western frontiers, and even got into armed incidents with the Americans over violations of Yugoslav air space.

In rapidly consolidating their power, the Partisans were aided by the ambiguous role of the churches during the German occupation and the civil war. Unlike the Polish Catholic church, which had played a heroic role in resisting the Germans, the Yugoslav Catholic church collaborated extensively with the Axis puppet regime and its massacres in Croatia. One of the worst extermination camps in Yugoslavia, Jasenovac, was run by a former ordained priest who presided over the massacre of several hundred thousand Yugoslavs, mostly Orthodox and Jews. A number of Franciscans fought arms in hand against the Partisans and participated in massacres in Central Bosnia. As a consequence, the church's ability to counterpose itself to the new regime was seriously weakened; the trial of Cardinal Stepinac outraged Western opinion, but it hardly shook the new regime. It is ironic, therefore, to see that present Yugoslavia, in good part through the efforts of Tito himself and his Communist cadres, has developed into what is the most open and permissive of regimes ruled by a Communist party, one in which religious toleration is the norm, and the decentralization of political and economic power has gone further not only than in any other Communist regime but probably further than in many of the West European polities.

At the time of the break in 1948 between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, the Yugoslav party was exemplary in its orthodoxy; as a consequence, many of the party cadres were badly disoriented. Many thought that the break was based on a misunderstanding—the first party congress after the break ended with cheers for both Tito and Stalin. However, it was far from a misunderstanding, and over a hundred thousand mem-

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bers of the party ended up being purged or jailed for either siding with the Soviets or making insufficiently clear the fact that they were not doing so. Among the non-party masses on the other hand, the break with the Soviets vastly increased the popularity of the party and the regime. Unlike its East European sisters, the party (and Tito) became, in the eyes of non- and anti-Communist Yugoslavs, the defender of national independence rather than the instrumentality of Soviet rule.

THIS ROLE of Tito helped legitimate the party's rule and gave it a broader base of power, enabling it to begin the drastic set of experiments that have produced present Yugoslav society. The first and most critical of the Yugoslav innovations in Communist practice consisted in decentralizing the economy. The cumbersome bureaucratic central planning structures were dismantled and gradually replaced by a system of self-managed employee- and worker-controlled enterprises operating within a socialist market economy. These innovations were tightly linked. To develop a system of self-management required giving the enterprises an autonomy in decision-making that was in total contradiction with detailed centralized planning. On the other hand, given the absence of the directives and discipline of a central plan, the introduction of market criteria was indispensable to provide minimum efficiency and cost accounting for the economy. It took a good fifteen years for this system to take its present form, but it is now generally agreed that the Yugoslav economy is not only more flexible and dynamic than its East European counterparts but has allowed a vast increase in the participation in government by workers and managers in the individual enterprises. Most bluntly stated, the Yugoslav economy is not run by party fiat or directives from the center but rather by a complex set of participatory bodies operating within the broad constraints of a market.

This contribution of the Yugoslav party leadership, presided over by Tito, not only has become a beacon for most of the reformers in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, but has within it serious lessons for the socialist and labor parties of Western Europe. It suggests a real possibility that a socially-owned economy need not become the bureaucratic nightmare of Eastern Europe or the centralized, inefficient creature of technocratic elites in Western Europe. It is now no longer possible to talk about the possibility of self-management and decentralization without coming to terms with the Yugoslav experience. That Tito, a former Comintern functionary, presided over such a drastic reversal of the Soviet experience and canon, is but one indication of his extraordinary flexibility and freedom from dogma when faced with real problems.

THE SECOND innovation of the Tito regime was the gradual devolution of the party, now the League of Communists, from the complete, ever-present, sole actor on the political and social scene, to the role of a dominant partner in a complex set of institutions which have genuine independence and play an autonomous role in decision-making. Make no mistake: Yugoslavia remains a one-party state. Direct political opposition can land one in trouble, and civil liberties are sometimes violated. Nonetheless, in a number of areas—the economy itself, the trade unions, the educational system, and the arenas of intellectual discourse—a considerable autonomy has developed. In all these areas the party is indeed present as a major factor, but it is by no means the only presence. The party-League thus has permitted the legalization of strikes, a vast range of journals in which sharp polemical debate rages, the importation of Western books and journals, and has helped develop the present norm of discourse which is polemical and confrontational. There is no prior censorship. In his frequently critical book *The Yugoslavs*, Dusko Doder compared Yugoslav and Soviet courts: "The atmosphere was entirely different. . . . [In the Soviet Union] a timorous defense counsel appeared to be a part of the prosecuting team. By comparison there was a real struggle in the Yugoslav courts. I talked to several seasoned observers of Communist affairs who were astonished at the degree of legality within the Yugoslav system compared to that of the Soviet bloc." It is not uninteresting that a number of major academic figures in Yugoslav life, even in the social sciences, are not only not members of the League but explicitly do not consider themselves Marxists.

Another strand of decentralization is represented by the unprecedented evolution of genuine autonomy and power for the republics and provinces. Yugoslavia has probably gone further in constructing the framework for a multi-ethnic society than any other existing state. There are five languages used in the Parliament, the various national republics have become the national homes of their respective peoples, and the Yugoslav treatment of the large Hungarian and Albanian minorities stands as a continual reproach to the practices of both Eastern and Western European states. As an example, neither the Flemish-Walloon dispute in Belgium nor the French-English dispute in Canada would be conceivable within the Yugoslav system since the component nationalities of Yugoslavia have more rights already than the demands of the national groups in the multi-ethnic Western states. Here again, Tito has played a major, if not central, role in the development of the notion of a Yugoslav commonwealth, created of equal national groups. His vast prestige has been systematically directed against the assertions by either the federal bureaucracy or by any individual ethnic group of a role which would make the confederation impossible.

The third major contribution of Tito, and one more intimately associated with him personally than the other specific characteristics of the Yugoslav model, was the development of the policy of non-alignment. In its simplest form, non-

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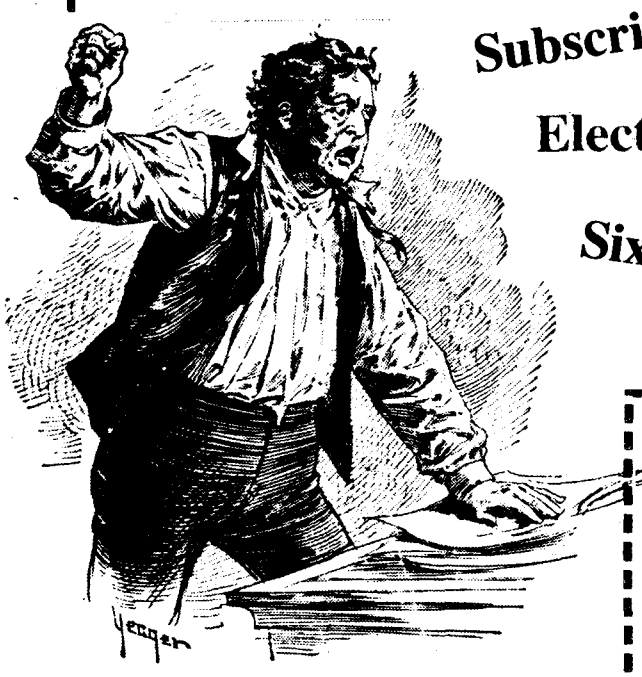
alignment represents the resistance of the weaker independent states, primarily in the Third World, to their integration into the alliances of the two superpowers. As such, it becomes simultaneously a restraint upon the Soviet Union and the United States and a framework within which the smaller, mostly newly-independent nation-states can assert their right to become subjects rather than objects in international politics. The non-aligned movement is neither ideologically nor politically consistent, including as it does a vast range and variety of regimes, but it has the enormous advantage of frustrating the attempts of the superpowers to divide the world into classic spheres of influence. That Yugoslavia, a weak, relatively underdeveloped European country, has been able to play such a role in international politics is no mean tribute to Tito's role as a statesman. His successors will undoubtedly continue the policy but, in all probability, will tend to focus more on relations with their European neighbors and will play a less significant global role.

The fourth, and perhaps most significant, contribution of Tito to the stability and future of a nonaligned Yugoslavia lies precisely in the arrangements for a post-Tito succession. Unlike Mao and Stalin, Tito initiated during his own lifetime a prolonged and systematic debate for the setting up of a succession mechanism which would have three major characteristics: it would guarantee that there would never be another Tito; it would legitimate an orderly collective leadership; and it would base that collective leadership not on the centralized bureaucracy of a Soviet or Chinese pattern, but on the genuine power centers of present Yugoslav society, i.e., the leaderships of the various republics and institutions in Yugoslavia. What makes it likely that Tito's successors will maintain that collective leadership is that almost without exception they hold autonomous power earned in their respective spheres rather than wielding their power in different arenas by virtue of being part of a party center. It is idle to speculate on which of the personalities will have more individual, moral, or personal prestige within the collective bodies, but the general profile is clear: this is a leadership which, unlike Tito, has overwhelmingly developed in the period after the break with the Soviets and has been politically formed when the facts of Yugoslavian independence and its specific and separate variety of socialism were already firmly established. The new leadership will, if anything, be more independent vis-à-vis Moscow—and consequently will also have to keep a certain distance from Washington. Insofar as there is pressure in Yugoslavia today against potentially dissident currents within the League, the pressure will be against those seen as soft on the Soviets, or those seeking to assert a tougher and more centralized policy internally. This is a roundabout way of saying, perhaps, that post-Tito Yugoslavia will most likely be even more open and develop even further towards democratic norms than has been the case to date.

And here, the uniqueness of the model has a broader relevance than is often grasped by Western analysts. What the



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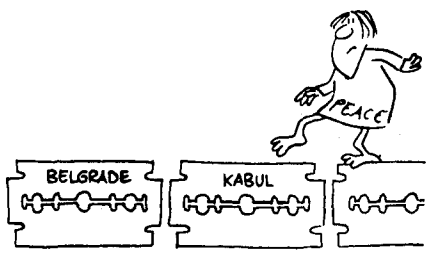
Yugoslavs show is that it is possible to evolve from a totalitarian, centralized state-socialist model to one which, while retaining certain authoritarian characteristics, can move far towards increased participation and debate and towards devolving genuine power from the centralized party bureaucracy to elected bodies of citizens. In this respect, the legalization of strikes, the almost universal freedom of Yugoslavs to travel, both within the state and abroad, the form that the political debate takes, and the political culture which is emerging within the self-managed institutions are all more characteristic of an open society than of authoritarianism. Perhaps Tito's greatest contribution lies in charting a possible path for the development of centralized authoritarian states into societies that are socialist and increasingly democratic.

YUGOSLAV APPREHENSIONS AFTER AFGHANISTAN

Tremors in Belgrade



PEDRO RAMET

Danas jos u Afganistanu:
Sutra već u vasem stanu.
(Today still in Afghanistan:
Tomorrow already in your apartment.)
—Current Yugoslav saying

THERE ARE TWO possible "future histories" of postwar Yugoslavia, such as might be written ten or twenty years from now. The first, which might be called the "optimistic version," would describe Yugoslavia's development of self-management and its creative role in the non-aligned movement as setting the multi-ethnic society of twenty-two million inhabitants on an independent course through which it developed certain original approaches to a number of universal problems (such as ethnic heterogeneity in a federal state, regional economic disparity, and the participation of the general public in political decision-making). An alternative version, the "pessimistic version," would look back on the Tito era as a promising experiment which the Soviets had, at all costs, to abort. The Yugoslavs live in full consciousness of the existence of these alternative "future histories," and Belgrade's repeated public insistence on the certainty of the former path of development is itself a confirmation of the persistence of nightmares about Soviet invasion.

Naturally Yugoslav nightmare scenarios have long revolved around the death of Tito. In the most paranoid visions, this signal event is expected to unleash manifestations of separatism within the country, spawn an internal struggle for power, lead to infiltration by *Ustashi* terrorists trained in West Germany, encourage intensified efforts by the Bulgarians to annex Yugoslav Macedonia, and finally culminate in a full-scale Soviet invasion.

The Yugoslavs, wary of the Russians ever since their expulsion from the Cominform in 1948, were put on guard by the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Yet they took refuge in the fact that under the Brezhnev Doctrine, the ostensible rationalization for the invasion, the Soviets appeared to limit their sphere of self-proclaimed jurisdiction to those countries in alliance with Moscow. This self-limitation was never entirely explicit, nor even especially definite, but the Yugoslavs continued to hope that Brezhnev would respect Yugoslav sovereignty and attempted to elicit from him, on the occasion of his visit to Belgrade in November 1976, express guarantees to that effect.

Brezhnev was more than forthcoming but vague, and the Yugoslavs retained the lingering uncertainty that has haunted them since the dark days in Prague in August 1968 when, concerned that the Soviets might not stop at the Czech borders, the Yugoslavs ordered a full mobilization.

Until now the Soviets have never, in the postwar period, invaded any non-Warsaw Pact state. The Soviets' prior three armed interventions—East Germany in 1953, Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968—were all compatible with a 'status quo' interpretation of the Brezhnev Doctrine. It seemed plausible that the Doctrine was intended to apply only to states which had aligned themselves with the Kremlin. Yugoslavia was non-aligned. Therefore—it followed—Yugoslavia was exempt from the Brezhnev Doctrine. In essence, the doctrine could be viewed and in fact was generally viewed in the West as a kind of self-limiting precept.

THE SOVIET INTERVENTION in Afghanistan, however, lays this interpretation to rest, and forces one to conclude either that the Brezhnev Doctrine is no guide at all to Soviet behavior or that it must be given a much more radical interpretation. It is this fact that gave it such an ominous hue for Belgrade.

While Miljan Komatina, Yugoslavia's permanent UN ambassador, denounced the Soviet action before the General Assembly on January 14, Ignat Golob, Yugoslavia's Deputy Foreign Minister, paid an urgent visit to Bucharest to discuss

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the heightened tension produced by the Afghan situation, meeting with Stefan Andrei, the Rumanian Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Soviets, at the same time, were conducting bilateral talks with the Bulgarians, Yugoslavia's long-time foes in the Balkans. When the Soviets concentrated troops along the Hungarian and Bulgarian borders with Yugoslavia, Belgrade replied by calling up the reserves, rushing tanks to the borders to face the Soviet troops, and hurriedly installing anti-aircraft guns at Belgrade airport. In the gathering crisis, *Borba* reported a record influx of applications to join the Yugoslav League of Communists. With Tito in the hospital and, at that point, already in serious condition, the Yugoslav National Army sent Tito an open telegram on January 18, expressing "... our complete unity, readiness, and the determination of all members of the army to defend, together with all our nations and nationalities. unshakably and resolutely, the inheritance of our revolution, our freedom, and the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia."

In a highly critical article in *Pravda*, the Soviets singled out Yugoslavia for attack as being among those "who have supported the American standpoint and attacked the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union." The Yugoslavs, however, refused to allow themselves to be dislodged from their nonaligned perch of concern to all nations. In a keynote article in *Borba*, Vlado Teslić lashed out at the USSR's "flagrant violation of the sovereignty and independence of a country which has been part of the nonaligned movement from the beginning," and rejected as "entirely unacceptable" Soviet claims that imperialist infiltration of Afghanistan had threatened Afghani "democracy" and Soviet security.

Even before the invasion was launched, but after the Soviets had repaired the runways at Kabul airport and completed other key preparations, Gen. Nikola Ljubicić, Yugoslavia's Minister of Defense, had warned that "our country will never accept defeat and will never recognize any occupation." Then the Yugoslav National Army conducted demonstrative maneuvers in northern Serbia, under the watchful eye of Yugoslav Admiral Branko Mamula.

The Soviets were, meantime, clearly displeased with Rumania's outspoken criticism of the invasion, and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko stopped in Bucharest, on his way back from Syria, for talks with Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu. Determined to bring the Rumanians into line, Gromyko managed to elicit Rumanian agreement to a vaguely worded joint communiqué condemning "reactionaries and imperialist forces" that want to "exploit the tense international situation" to increase defense spending. The Yugoslavs watched these proceedings closely and a few days later dispatched Dusan Dragosavac, a high-ranking party official, to Bucharest to be briefed on the Gromyko-Ceausescu talks.

With the commander of the Warsaw Pact, Marshal Viktor Kulikov, engaged in secret talks with Bulgarian General Anatolii Gribkov, the Yugoslavs scrupulously held to their nonaligned position. In the midst of fulminations against the Soviet Union, they tossed out token denunciations of the U.S. introduction of new, medium-range missiles in NATO, and, after *Time* magazine published a report claiming that Tito had sought a guarantee of American military assistance in the event of a Soviet attack, huffily denied the report, demanding its official repudiation from the American side. That Yugoslavia continues to enjoy tacit protection under the NATO umbrella is generally recognized, but while Yugoslavia wants *and needs* tacit NATO protection, it cannot afford overt NATO protection—which would compromise Belgrade's nonaligned posture and conceivably serve as a pretext for Soviet interference.

IF THE AFGHAN crisis stirred latent fears of invasion, it also threatened to produce other results that the Yugoslavs could scarcely welcome. First of all, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has sharply repolarized the international system and may signify a definite end to détente—something the Yugoslavs cannot afford, both for reasons of trade (they are associated with both the EEC and COMECON, for instance) and because of the delicate balancing act which lies at the heart of their foreign policy.

Second, the invasion has driven home the impotence of the nonaligned movement—one of the supposed pillars of stability on which post-Tito Yugoslavia might rest.

Third, the invasion has broken up the waxing entente among the three chief Eurocommunist parties, and once more drawn the French Communist Party back into the Soviet fold. By contrast, the Italian and Spanish CPs firmly condemned the Soviet aggression and underscored the need to resuscitate détente. Paolo Bufalini, member of the CPI Directorate, rushed, not to Moscow, but to Belgrade, in an expression of solidarity with the Yugoslavs. And, at Belgrade's invitation, Manuel Azcarate, member of the Executive Committee of the Spanish Communist Party, came to the Yugoslav capital at the end of January for consultations with Aleksandar Grlickov, member of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the League of Communists.

In short, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has significantly raised the level of apparent threat to Yugoslavia. At the nerve center of this phenomenon is the scuttling of the Brezhnev Doctrine of 1968 with its implication of restraint outside the confines of the Soviet camp. But the consequences of the invasion for détente, for the nonaligned movement, and for Eurocommunism, are also deeply unsettling for the Yugoslavs. Paradoxically, Yugoslav foreign policy has probably never been more constrained than now: if Yugoslavia is not exactly a prisoner of its own nonaligned posture, it nonetheless finds, in the present situation, far less room for maneuver than it has enjoyed in the past. Belgrade's assiduously cultivated contacts in the nonaligned movement and with the Eurocommunist parties had been designed to reinforce the battlements, as it were. Now it is apparent just how flimsy those 'reinforcements' are. For Belgrade, the worst nightmare of all is of having to face the Russians alone while an irresolute world looks on.

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Stage

PINTER'S BETRAYAL

BRINGING BACK EMPATHY

BY NOW it is common knowledge that *Betrayal* is a departure of sorts for Harold Pinter. Many of the English reviewers greeted it with regret as a retreat to aesthetic conservatism; many of the American reviewers greeted it with enthusiasm as an advance to empathetic accessibility. Everyone is right after his fashion. *Betrayal* has a verifiable plot which is neither an arbitrary dramatic situation, like those in *The Caretaker* and *The Homecoming*, nor a cat's cradle of ambiguity, as in *Old Times* and *No Man's Land*. Pinter, as always, is fascinated with the unreliability of memory—Jerry and Emma differ about whose kitchen it was in which Jerry lifted her daughter high above above his head—but *Betrayal*, however soft-edged in its details, gives the audience a firm place to stand. Although the story is told in reverse, 1977 to 1968, it is an identifiable triangle play in which the love affair, the marriage and the friendship of the two men come to an end. The characters have careers (a publisher, an agent, a gallery owner), bits of biography (Jerry went to Cambridge, Robert to Oxford), offstage families, but the play is still Pinter enough to keep the three figures in isolation, allowing them to enact a number of brief scenes which gain their resonance from one another not from any reference to the world outside. For this reason, I think it is a mistake to open each of the two acts with offstage noises, evocations of city streets, of romantic Venice which suggest a social context the play neither develops nor needs.

A few critics—William Collins in the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, for one—have questioned the success of American actors with Pinter's lines, but the American voices do not seem to me to be a problem in this play. Unlike *The Caretaker* with its rich use of English slang and the rhythm of lower-class urban dialect, *The Betrayal* is written in conventional English and its rhythms are less those of verisimilitude than of artistic decision. The performance that goes wrong to my ear is that of Roy Scheider, as Robert, the husband, for he seems too often to be emphasizing the lines as lines. His readings, I assume, are the result of his attempt to create a character who is trying desperately to use his words as a lid to smother his feelings, but the effect too often is to suggest speeches in quotation marks. Both Blythe Danner and Raul Julia have moved into Pinter's language and made themselves at home; Julia's Jerry is a particularly impressive creation.

What the American actors have brought to the play is an overt emotionalism which seems foreign to Pinter—at least to pre-*Betrayal* Pinter. Although he has written characters, like Davies in *The Caretaker*, whose feelings are fully exposed, for the most part the fear, the pain, the aggression in Pinter's people are kept on the leash of a language in which both the commonplaces and the coolness of delivery serve as opaque covers through which the emotional subtext can be more sensed than seen. In the many interviews that mushroomed around the production of *Betrayal*, the actors have discussed the need to suppress feelings in the playing of Pinter. For all their sense of holding back, however, they break through the surface of their words frequently. To anyone who remembers Vivien Merchant in *The Homecoming*, all ice and subterranean fire, the three performers in *Betrayal* are positively operatic. Of course, Pinter is partly responsible. He gives Emma her tears at the end of the first act, calls for Jerry to bury his face in his hands in the second scene. It is as though, in introducing a familiar plot into *Betrayal*, Pinter turned to conventional theatrical empathy. Insofar as that is his intention, the American performers serve him well.

At first glance, the playwright's decision to allow his play to move backwards in time may seem an attempt to stifle the effects of its use of conventional plot and character. Quite the contrary. As Walter Kerr said in his very appreciative review of *Betrayal* (*New York Times*, Jan. 20), Pinter has succeeded with the device, getting ever richer overtones as the events in the past are played against our already having seen where they will lead. Yet the resonances achieved are not that different from those in which a play, working with ordinary time, allows a remark in the first act to give extra meaning to another one at the end of the play, an echoing process of which Pinter has always been a master. I suspect that Pinter wants the reversal to work thematically as well.

Pinter titles have always played games, setting off questions that can tease a playgoer. Who is taking care of whom or what in *The Caretaker*? Who is coming home to whose home in *The Homecoming*? If the theme is betrayal, as the title suggests, which of the many betrayals—of marriage, of love, of friendship—is the central one in the play? There is something a little old-fashioned about "betray" in this context, an Edwardian elegance that suggests Spooner's use of the verb in *No Man's Land*. "Betrayal" sits a bit uncomfortably in the mouths of these three characters. There is a fascinating scene in the play in which Emma and Robert are discussing a novel which he refused to publish and which she is reading with pleasure. "Oh . . . not much more to say on that subject, really, is there?" he says, and she offers question for question, "What do you consider the subject to be?" "Betrayal," he says, but she insists, "No, it isn't," although she cannot name the subject because "I haven't finished it yet." She may be talking about the affair with Jerry which she is about to confess to Robert, but I think she is also commenting on the play itself. In the last scene, which is the first, Jerry is so exhilarated in his newly voiced love for Emma, she is so attracted to that exuber-

COMING: 'Waiting for Lefty on the Campuses' by Milton Mankoff.

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ance, Robert is so acceptingly balanced between them that they form a tight group, ripe with expectancy; the end of the play shouts a beginning that we know must end in disaster. Betrayal is the mechanism, a human failing. The theme is loss, possibility circumscribed, community dissolved. It is not until the play, like Emma's novel, is finished that we really know that, and it takes the reversal in time to make it clear both intellectually and emotionally. GERALD WEALES

Screen

SORRY, WRONG NUMBER

HORATIO ALGER CALLING

AFTER WORLD WAR II the Italian Neo-Realists, and later the French New Wave, rebelled against what they called "white-telephone comedies." This was the tradition each country had of movies with opulent production values and no imagination: the "Tradition of Quality," as its French practitioners put it, meaning a tradition without quality. Often adapted from a play that had had its best house at matinees, this was the sort of movie for which the archetypal set was a drawing room with too much upholstery, too many vases stuffed with fresh flowers, and a white telephone on the table. The film conventionally began with the telephone ringing in the empty room so the leading lady could make an entrance (as if still on a stage) to answer it.

Now, twenty years after those white telephones were swept out to sea by the New Wave, they're washing up on our shores again from France, the flotsam and jetsam of the world cinema. Maybe it's more of a black telephone this time, a farce adapted from the Theater of the Absurd. But it's as insipid as ever. The attempt at bad taste here is as disingenuous as the good taste was in the original version. These new films come at both life and art from the other side, but arrive at the same mid-point—a nul point—as their predecessors. Individual members of this cinematic species always seem weak. When you swat one with a review, it is deceptively easy to kill off. But like cockroaches and common colds, this strain of moviemaking proves surprisingly adaptable, ineradicable. It survives forever.

The most recent example to crawl into our theaters is *Coup de Tête (Hothead)*, which stars the new matinee idol of these films, Patrick Dewaere. Movie history, like other kinds, is never written in absolutes. Gradually each new development evolves into its opposite, the relationship between them at first seeming more like continuance than contradiction. Thus Dewaere made his American debut in this new genre several years ago in a film called *The Best Way*, which was directed by a protégé of that old hand from the New Wave, François Truffaut. In *The Best Way* Dewaere played a polymorphous perverse camp counselor who taunts homosexuals. This led to other great roles as camp counselors, such as that Dewaere played in Bertrand Blier's *Get Out Your Handkerchiefs*. With vehicles like these, Dewaere became a star of about the same magnitude as Bill Murray in *Meatball*.

Locker-room humor is very much the idiom of this kind of comedy. Dewaere got his start kicking around a soccer ball during the opening scene of *The Best Way*. In Blier's *Going Places* he took a season off to kick around women as if they were soccer balls. Now, in *Coup de Tête*, Dewaere plays a soccer player let out of prison to star in the big game.

Dewaere is François Perrin, who is being paraded through the streets of his hometown in the film's opening scene. François is the hero of the hour because he has scored the winning goals in the local team's victory at the regional finals. During the flashback that follows, however, we learn that things have not always gone so well for him. The first time he showed his prowess on a soccer field, he injured the team's star in a scrimmage. For this he was not only thrown off the team and out of his job, but accused of rape. The victim of a frame-up, he was serving his prison term when the team bus went off the road on the way to the finals. Desperate for substitutes with whom they might at least field a team, the town fathers got François released. Now, as we arrive again at the point where the flashback began, he has seized the opportunity to reverse his fortunes, to emerge triumphant. It's a real Horatio Alger story.

But the film doesn't end there. It goes on as if it weren't already over at this point. A movie plot is bound to be in trouble when it uses a classic structure like the flashback but doesn't end once the structure is complete. What you've got is two movies, with whatever is left over after the flashback going into the second one. It's the sign of a movie that wants to have something both ways—to tell a certain story, and then un-tell it somehow, take it all back. That's what *Coup de Tête* tries to do. Having told its Horatio Alger story, the film then tries to convince us that really François is much more hip than that. He's really as lonely as the long-distance runner. At a banquet he gives for all the town's important people, he confronts them with their duplicity and conspiracy in framing

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him on that rape charge. Then he threatens to destroy all their business establishments the next day to get even, and to spill what he knows to the papers if they try to stop him.

Coup de Tête would be bad enough if it simply tried to play both ends against the middle like this, giving its hero his old-fashioned triumph over adversity and then letting him throw his success away with contempt in the modern, outlaw spirit. But the film isn't willing to take even that big a risk. The second ending, after the flashback, isn't really an alternative to the first one. It's the same ending all over again. One reason we knew in the first story that François was a right guy at heart was that as soon as he got out of prison, he hitch-hiked to the home of the beautiful heiress he had been accused of raping. Although he told a truckdriver on the way that he was going to break in and rape her now—why not, since he was in prison for the crime?—he couldn't bring himself to do it once he actually got there. Nor does he actually wreck anybody's business and tear up the town as threatened in the second half of the movie. He just isn't that kind of rat, still. When he couldn't bring himself to rape the girl on his first visit, she was so charmed that she befriended him. Now as he arrives at her house a second time, she's waiting to greet him with open arms. If winning the heart of the local millionaire's daughter isn't the plot of a Horatio Alger novel, I don't know what is.

Having told the truckdriver he hitched with the first time that he was going to break in and rape her, he tells the one who picks him up on his return trip a very different story—about how he threatened to beat up his sergeant in the army if he ever caught the man off base, and one day he did catch him out shopping. "What did you do?" the truckdriver asks expectantly. "Oh, nothing," François admits, "I went on with my own shopping." This shaggy-dog story shows that François has at last gained some insight into his own character. It's the final *coup de grâce* for the whole, mistaken idea that this guy ever was a *coup de tête*.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

Books: THE HISTORIAN AS POLEMICIST

CATHOLICISM AND MODERNITY:
CONFRONTATION OR CAPITULATION?
James Hitchcock
Seabury, $12.95, 261 pp.

George G. Higgins

EARLY ON in *Catholicism and Modernity*, Professor Hitchcock complains that "a standard history of modern theology, by a Dominican, polemicizes openly on almost every page." I take no satisfaction in saying that that's a perfect description of Hitchcock's personal style of argumentation, not only in the volume under review, but in some of his other publications as well, notably, for example, in a booklet entitled *On The Present Position of Catholics In America*. He polemicizes fiercely on almost every page—indeed in almost every paragraph and every sentence in his new book—and not infrequently, alas, harshly judges other people's motives after the manner of a hyped-up college debater who is hell-bent on scoring points and completely demolishing the opposition.

Hitchcock, by his aggressively polemical style of writing, amply confirms his own contention that "objectivity is a fragile thing, possible perhaps only with regard to subjects which do not engage the scholar's own personality. Religion is not one of these." This may or may not be a valid generalization on his part. In any event, it must be said that *Catholicism and Modernity* is woefully lacking in objectivity. It is replete with tendentious statements designed (unwittingly, I assume) not to persuade the neutral reader by stating the pros and cons of a given argument, but simply (and simplistically) to disparage and discredit the opposition. Repeatedly, Hitchcock indulges without restraint in sweeping and, for the most part, one-sidedly polemical generalizations supported, at the most, by his fragmentary "evidence," which is culled in large part from second-, third-, and fourth-hand sources and which Hitchcock seldom seems to have double-checked by interviewing or even talking to the persons being quoted.

Some of Hitchcock's sweeping generalizations are, by the nature of the accusation and thanks to escape hatches planted in the wording, totally unverifiable. This, for example: "To an extent which is still not fully appreciated, the drive for social justice in the past decade has been a metaphor, in the lives of many of those participating in it, for their own sexual liberation" (p. 55).

In other cases Hitchcock's failure to check his sources with the principals involved leads him to give credence and credibility to statements which are demonstrably contrary to fact. He writes, for example, "Despite the fact that many of their own fathers probably belonged to labor unions, members of the Catholic Committee on Urban Ministry in 1977 rejected a proposal that they seek closer ties with the labor movement" (p. 162). After Hitchcock made this charge in that earlier booklet, he was, to my personal knowledge, informed that it was completely untrue. But here it is again. Did the correction, which should have been unnecessary in the first place, come too late for this printing? Would it have reflected poorly on the accuracy of his many other examples if an *erratum* slip had been inserted in the present volume?

If *Commonweal* had as much linage at its disposal as, say, the *New York Review*, I would be prepared to cite at least twenty examples of what I consider to be egregiously misleading statements which Hitchcock, in his workaday role as a Professor of History (as opposed to his part-time role as an angry polemicist), would presumably reject out of hand if one of his graduate students at St. Louis University were to try to palm them off in

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a Ph.D. or M.A. dissertation.

This is not to say that polemical tracts must be held to identically the same standards of scholarship that history professors normally demand of their students. Nor is it to say that full-time professors of history are barred from moonlighting as polemicists. It is to say, however, that if and when they do so, they, of all people, ought to strive for a decent minimum of fairness and objectivity even in the heat of the fray. To put it negatively, they should not manipulate their "evidence" to "prove" a preestablished thesis. When Hitchcock writes, for example, that "news accounts of meetings of the Canon Law Society suggest a near unanimity among its members as to the desirability of the 'experimental norms' for annulling marriages" (p. 116), perhaps, he should also mention that the same news accounts suggest a near unanimity among the American bishops on the same subject.

As Hitchcock himself warns when advising the other side how to conduct itself in an intellectual dialogue, polemicists should not cast their argument "relentlessly in terms of a conflict between 'progressives' and 'reactionaries,' " or between "the respective forces of light and darkness."

Hitchcock, unfortunately, has recklessly violated this injunction in trying to prove that while "virtually every ecumenical council has been followed by a crisis, usually stemming from the refusal of a major segment of the Church to accept its decrees . . . the Second Vatican Council is perhaps the first council to be followed by a crisis in which its teachings have been distorted into meanings contrary to their original intention."

Commonweal readers familiar with Hitchcock's previous polemical writings will not be surprised to learn that ninety-nine percent of his criticism in this regard is directed very aggressively at so-called "liberals" and that less than one percent is directed at so-called "conservatives," and even then in rather muted terms. To be sure, at the very end of *Catholicism and Modernity*, as a kind of afterthought, Hitchcock concedes that "just as there are many liberal Catholics whom the Church will find it impossible to placate, no matter what its policies, so there are traditionalists the validity of whose beliefs cannot be admitted without doing severe damage to the fabric of the Church." He then mentions by name only two groups in particular—the Catholic Traditionalist Movement and the followers of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. At heart, he says, they are schismatics. That's as far as he is willing to go in criticizing so-called conservative recalcitrants. By contrast, throughout the rest of his book he severely criticizes, indeed excoriates, any number of so-called liberals and does so in considerable detail. By actual count, he devotes approximately one page to so-called "conservatives" and 240 pages to so-called "liberals." I might add that not a single entry in his extensive series of footnotes is directed at conservatives. I doubt that Professor Hitchcock (as opposed, again, to Hitchcock the polemicist) would consider this an objective balance in a dissertation submitted by one of his students. In short, I think his belated and perfunctory show of even-handedness at the tag end of his book is

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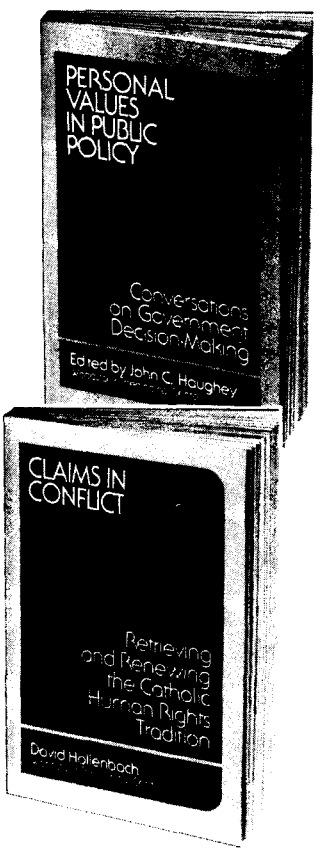
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window dressing and not to be taken seriously.

Given the impossibility of reprinting extensive examples, the best way to characterize Hitchcock's style of argumentation is with the term *procrustean*. Procrustes was a legendary highwayman of Attica who tied his victims upon an iron bed and stretched or cut off their legs to adapt them to its length. Analogically, in current usage, a procrustean is one who is harsh and inflexible in fitting someone or something to a preconceived idea or system. If I understand Hitchcock correctly, his own preconceived idea in *Catholicism and Modernity* is that it is "the triumph of the therapeutic mentality" (as defined by the sociologist, Philip Rieff, whom he quotes more frequently than any other author) that largely accounts for the post-Vatican II crisis in the church. This crisis, he says, "has accompanied, with few people being aware of it, an almost cosmic shift in Western cultural and moral attitudes occurring at so basic a level that their full impact has been little appreciated." His guru, Philip Rieff, he informs us, "perceives a fundamental shift from the 'inhibitory' to the 'remissive' mode of behavior, that is, from a culture whose dominant symbols convey moral and religious affirmations, which include interdicts or prohibitions, to a culture which systematically grants permission to the individual to transgress these interdicts in the name of personal freedom and fulfillment. The act of transgression becomes 'endlessly attractive,' and a reflex attitude develops in which no fixed moral or religious belief enjoys authority or commands obedience for any appreciable length of time."

An objective attempt to apply Rieff's basic thesis to the current crisis in the church might conceivably serve a useful purpose. Unfortunately, Hitchcock's attempt is so consistently superficial and so lacking in objectivity as to be almost ludicrous. He manages to persuade himself that almost every bishop, priest, religious or lay person with whom he happens to disagree, is, whether wittingly or not, addicted to the "therapeutic mentality."

Let me not exaggerate in this regard. Hitchcock makes a number of valid points and very properly blows the whistle on a scattering of people who have expressed silly and even dangerous opinions or conclusions concerning theological, pastoral, and related matters. Regrettably, however, he also distorts and, in some cases, completely misrepresents the views of a number of other Catholics.

I provide only two examples, concerning which I happen to have particularly good knowledge. At one point, Hitchcock declares that "the needs of blacks, Chicanos, and other culturally distinct Catholic groups are being defined by those 'leaders' who are themselves closest to being assimilated into the dominant culture. . . ." And so on. Unlike Hitchcock I am personally acquainted with the majority of the black and Chicano "leaders" referred to in this passage, and it strikes me as meeting the traditional definition of libel: malicious misrepresentation.

At another point Hitchcock writes the following:

> The desire to bear moral witness in society, although it involves much that is noble and genuine, is part of the general process of middle-class "liberation" by which certain people, consciously or unconsciously, learn to transcend the narrow boundaries of their culture in order to take "enlightened" and "advanced" positions on controversial questions, positions on which they are certain history will vindicate them. This means, among other things, that only certain kinds of social injustice are recognized and responded to. In 1976, for example, a staff member of the United States Catholic Conference told a committee of the United States Senate that the Senate should reject a proposed American treaty with Spain lest it be construed as "an accolade of legitimacy" for the Spanish government of King Juan Carlos. . . . A year later the same priest turned a deaf ear to Hungarian-Americans agitated over the United States government's intention of returning the Crown of St. Stephen, most sacred of Hungarian symbols, to the Communist government of Hungary. This choice example of ecclesiastical Newspeak reflected a habit, widespread in religious circles . . . of protesting injustice only in Western nations, never behind the Iron Curtain, and in effect distinguishing "good" dictatorships from "bad" ones.

To the uninformed that passage may appear telling; in fact, it is outrageously tendentious. The USCC priest referred to is Father Bryan Hehir. The fact is that Hehir has authored, for the bishops of the United States, an extremely forthright criticism of injustices behind the Iron Curtain and, in dozens of other ways, has clearly demonstrated that Hitchcock's reference to him is a hollow caricature. As for returning the Crown of St. Stephen to Hungary, I might add that I was a member of the U.S. delegation which did so. I trust it will not be too great a shock to Mr. Hitchcock that I took on this assignment with the complete approval of church authorities both in Hungary and at the Vatican. Are they, too, victims of the "triumph of the therapeutic" or willfully blind to Communist injustices?

Perhaps Hitchcock simply believes he has hold of some general truths about minority leaders or church staff members, including what motivates them "consciously or unconsciously"; and that it doesn't matter whether his illustrations of these generalizations are accurate. But that is exactly the problem of Procrustes's bed: Hitchcock simply stretches or cuts off his victims' legs to adapt them to his preconceptions.

As previously noted, he also repeatedly generalizes from isolated and altogether unrepresentative examples or citations. I lost count, for example, of the number of times he supports some generalization by citing "a priest," "a nun," "a theologian," "a Catholic bureaucrat," "a catechetical director," or what have you. On closer examination, many of these individuals proved to be isolated mavericks.

The subject of Hitchcock's new book—the tension between Catholicism and modernity—is admittedly very im-

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portant and very timely. As Adrian Hastings noted recently in *The London Tablet* with reference to a similar book which Hitchcock quotes very favorably in his own study (*Christianity and the World Order* by Edward Norman): "I can think of few more important subjects for Christians to ponder today. . . ." But the tragedy is, Hastings concluded, "that, for all his fireworks, Dr. Norman has done the job so badly."

Again, I take no personal satisfaction (quite the contrary) in saying that that's exactly the way I feel about Hitchcock's terribly pessimistic analysis of the current crisis in the church. He has addressed himself to a crucially important subject. It's a tragedy, however, that for all his fireworks and for all his literary talent, he has done it so badly.

Brilliant fragments of sensibility

THE NOTEBOOKS OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

Edited by Matthew J. Bruccoli

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $14.95, 336 pp.

THE PRICE WAS HIGH: THE LAST UNCOLLECTED STORIES OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $19.95, 784 pp.

Robert Emmet Long

WITH the *Notebooks* and *The Price Was High*, Fitzgerald's last backshelf of writing has now been collected in book form. Neither book will appreciably alter his reputation, but they will fill out the Fitzgerald record, and will clearly be of interest to Fitzgerald's committed followers with still unquenched appetites for his connoisseurship of moods and effectively captured moments.

The *Notebooks*, particularly, contain nothing *but* moments—witty or reflective observations, comments on contemporaries ("Ernest would always give a helping hand to a man on a ledge a little higher up"), descriptions of scenery and of men and (more often) women, fragments of conversation, jottings. Some of the *Notebooks* entries appeared previously in *The Crack-Up*, edited by Edmund Wilson in 1945; but they were not as Fitzgerald made them; they were cut, combined, and in certain cases "corrected." Bruccoli's *Notebooks* is a definitive edition, with all of Fitzgerald's entries accurately printed, together with a new section of notations made during his last years in Hollywood. Many of the entries were "stripped" by Fitzgerald from short stories he had published in magazines but did not plan to collect; and the source of these entries has been identified in a back-of-the-book index.

On the jacket of the book, James Dickey comments that the *Notebooks* "make writers of us all," and in a certain sense they do. They are a mixed treasury indeed, containing both diamonds and dross; but at their best, they convey the excitement of creative vision. The act of seeing is especially important. Fitzgerald sees a trolley "running on the crack of doom." A bus approaches in the darkness with "nineteen wild green eyes." A "toiling, sweating sun stoked the sky." Overhead a huge harvest moon "drips" its light. There are skilfully evoked impressions of places—New York, with its "evening gem play" outside a window, and its "quick metropolitan rhythm of love and birth and death that supplied dreams to the imaginative." Men in public life are glimpsed from startling angles: "those terrible sinister figures of Edison, of Ford and Firestone—in the rotogravures." He remarks on "the railroad kings of the pioneer West who sent their waitress sweethearts to convents in order to prepare them for their high destinies," and their whole lives are revealed in a vivid moment. Fitzgerald's entries, over two thousand of them, made between 1932 and his death in 1940, constantly reveal the man, and have the intimate, "confidential" quality that one finds in his fiction.

The Price Was High brings together all of Fitzgerald's magazine fiction not pub-

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Peter E. Murphy

Before You Eat

I suppose you expect me to listen
To the blessings of food before
You eat, the invoice of rituals, the
Summoning of invisible needs to this table.
Well, we'll have none of that name calling here.
Everything you desire is already conceived
In the eyes of potatoes, the arms of celery,
The hearts of lettuce—contained already—The
Lamb's back, the pig's head, the steer's rib.
Open your eyes, look out on this table—crusty
Body of bread, soft flesh of cheese—The work
I do is before you.
Chew me—I beg of you.
Chew me and grow.

David Fedo

Carrots

in the backyard
surrounded by a ragged hedge
grown neck high
my father and I turn the cool earth over.
Slugs and earthworms dig for cover:
our shovels are merciless.
A neighbor, watching from the hedge,
says there hasn't been a garden here
in twenty years.

We plant carrots in even rows.
The sun warms us as we work.
My father's shirt is off;
I can see the patches of prickly white hair
on his back.
The seeds snuggle down easily.
I rake away the clumps of grass
and stones,
turn on the sprinkler.
My father dozes in a canvas lawn chair.

Our only crop will be carrots.
Long ago
in this same but different earth
we grew carrots
as sweet as apples.
They were harvested in September
stored in a big crock in the cellar.
In such silence
our carrots
each year
overcame Minnesota winters

Jane Flanders

The Butter Road

It is everything that occurs to you—
treacherous, tantalizing—
that shimmer in the sun
is no mirage but the pure
stuff, waiting for pancakes.

I wouldn't lie to you,
not about Pennsylvania,
not in this poem anyway.
Neither would my father,
who says he turns thirteen
every time he walks along
the Butter Road, whistling.

His mother still needs a
little something from the store,
though she's been dead now
almost twenty years.
She doesn't lie either.

That's how it is with us
country folk. Have I ever
told you about the rivers of cider,
the abattoirs of cake?

Martin Galvin

An Irish Dinner

This is what the children pay to see,
a brooding table bent at chicken bones,
their own milk-mother slumped at gravy.
They themselves they see pecking at feed,
a father full of butchers' knives,
scarring the table with his scowls.
Such appetites as these stick
in the throat like shards of bone.
What's needed here, the children know,
is something soft and strong to blunt
dry murder. The sharp shivs corked
safe in skins will then slide harmless
past their parents, past their own hawked
necks. What's needed in this place,
the children guess, is an Irish mess
of homeblown potatoes, brown mountains
in the children's eyes, that open like tulips
sweet and white from the black, begrudging land.

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lished previously in the six posthumous volumes of his stories. It is a large, handsome edition of the almost eight hundred pages, with an introduction and explanatory headnotes; and it has a particular interest if it is read in conjunction with the *Notebooks*. Reading *The Price Was High* one sees where a number of the entries came from, where the highlighted moments occurred, and in what context.

The forty-nine stories in *The Price Was High* were those that Fitzgerald considered his worst; and reading through so many of them, all at once, is not a happy experience. Fitzgerald's heart was often not in the stories; the intensely felt, personal quality that he brought to his best work is often missing; and characterization, particularly in the earlier stories, is subordinated to ingenious twists and turns of plot to meet the requirements of the *Saturday Evening Post*. *The Price Was High* stories show Fitzgerald making his reluctant accommodation to the commercial market in order to survive, and to clear space in which to write his serious fiction; they reveal his professionalism under pressure.

Here and there, however, one finds a story that is still fresh. "At Your Age," about an older man's attempt to recover his youth by winning a young woman, has such freshness; is marked by sharp observation; and ends strongly with Tom Squires's recognition that though he loses the girl, he has recaptured the conflict felt in the heart that "has a value beyond victory and defeat." "The Rubber Check" is also highly readable, and involves a complicated, partly sympathetic response to a fortune hunter. "An Author's Mother" is small but shows a large, compassionate understanding.

Other stories, which are not wholly successful, have striking passages. "Diamond Dick and the First Law of Woman" establishes a rich emotional atmosphere in its middle section, and several passages were transferred from it, almost unchanged, to *The Great Gatsby*. A number of stories, written in the early 1930s, have the shared concerns and the remarkable style—the hard burnished finish, and grave, chastened prose rhythms— of *Tender Is the Night*. There are stories that end with a surge of poetic power or with sharply edged irony. At the end of "Discard," Fitzgerald writes tersely: "She was in another street now, opening another big charge account with life. Which is what we all do after a fashion—open an account and then pay." Sharp, caustic humor intrudes in Fitzgerald's portrayal of the rich, as in "An Unspeakable Egg," where a newspaper announcement of a rich girl's engagement is illustrated by a picture of the founders of the family dynasty—"a cross-eyed young lady holding the hand of a savage gentleman with four rows of teeth." "Indecision" contains gem-like descriptions of Switzerland, and other stories have the quickening touches that are distinctively Fitzgerald's—as in "A Freeze-Out," where summer comes so suddenly that it is as if someone had "opened a cage full of robins."

What one finds then, in this final installment of Fitzgeraldiana, in the *Notebooks* and *The Price Was High*, is a trunk full of brilliant fragments of sensibility. But, after all, sensibility is what one remembers Fitzgerald for. It is here, too, honed and sharpened by his gift for compression, Fitzgerald's sensibility projected dramatically in a phrase.

Myth and the body

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Doubleday, $4.95, 95 pp.

Anya Taylor

DAVID WAGONER'S *Who Shall Be The Sun?* combines renditions of existing Indian stories, such as the title story of the coiling serpent who wins the contest to be the sun, with poems of his own in the Indian mode—songs for an old voice, songs for dream-catchers, songs of Only-One and of He-Catches-Nothing. In both these forms the poems make available for many of us unfamiliar with them a fund of native American myths presented in a public voice, important in being wider than the fragmented confessional voices that have prevailed for so long. Eliot's and Pound's desire to rediscover a common tradition by amalgamating European myth is here being reconstituted on native grounds, in a way that not only makes us nostalgic for values the white man eradicated, but gives us a basis for re-establishing these values of attentiveness to and respect for the processes of life. Because the voice is simple without being primitive or antiquarian, these attitudes suddenly seem to be vibrantly possible solutions to contemporary malaise. Acknowledging directly the life and worth of things, the poet whispers to the fog, "Your song will be the silence between their songs, / Your white darkness will teach them, / You will wrap all love and fear in a beautiful blindness." To the fire he sings one of

REVIEWERS

MONSIGNOR GEORGE G. HIGGINS *is Secretary for Special Concerns of the United States Catholic Conference.*

ROBERT EMMET LONG *recently published* The Achieving of 'The Great Gatsby': F. Scott Fitzgerald, 1920-1925 *(Buckness University).*

ANYA TAYLOR *teaches at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City and is the author of the newly-published* Magic in English Romanticism *(University of Georgia).*

FATHER WILLIAM J. RICHARDSON, S.J., *is the author of* Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought.

ELEANOR WYMARD *is an associate professor in the English Department of Carlow College, Piattsburgh.*

DOROTHY DOHEN *is professor of Sociology at Fordham University Lincoln Center and the author of* Nationalism and American Catholicism.

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the most wonderful of his songs for an old voice:

I watch the point of the twirling stick
Where you are sleeping, where you will come again.
Already your breath, pale as fog through a vine-maple,
Is rising through shreds of cedar-bark toward me.
Open your dark-red eye, Fire-brother.

The fire grows till it warns off the spirits of the First People, who come hungrily staring toward it out of "the thin edge of darkness." Fog, Fire, and Ice are not out there to observe, but close by to speak to. The "Song for the Soul Going Away" is a body's lament for newly experienced emptiness, with echoes of Andrew Marvell's "Dialogue between the Soul and Body," describing the easing away of vitality. This, the "Song for the Maker of Nightmares," and the "Song for the First People" seem truly to serve the function that myths have always served: to ease even children through terrible passages.

A comparison with Ted Hughes's *Crow* inevitably comes to mind, for Crow speaks as Totem animal of a predatory tribe—ourselves—narrating the convulsive birth of horror, crunching bones and ripping guts, in a revulsion against being. This macabre element crops up in Wagoner's poems occasionally, as in "The Man Who Ate Himself," but generally Wagoner's myth urges us into its listening life, rather than drawing the primitive over to express our twentieth century degradations. A closer resemblance is to John C. Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks*, but here more of the songs are Wagoner's own adaptations of Indian themes to our central experience, indicating their availability to us. Wider comparisons with primitivism as it has been revived since the mid-eighteenth century to revitalize the exhausted materialism of civilization are inevitable.

One welcomes not only a body of congenial and helpful myth to add to our stock, but also the return of the third person narrative poem—someone else's experience! a living beyond our private skin!—even if the fictional personage is close enough to ourselves to be recognized and named "Only-One" or "He-Catches-Nothing," solitude and failure passing beyond allegory into character. I recommend this book of poems to everyone who has felt some fatigue with much recent first person poetry, who hungers for a cohesive world view, and who likes stories. Does that leave anyone out?

Robert Phillips's *The Pregnant Man* is a collection of poems taking off from Dylan Thomas's remark that "every idea, intuitive or intellectual, can be imaged and translated in terms of the body." Many of the poems celebrate companionable parts of the body in proliferations of whimsical images: a poem to the skin, to a heart—worn as a watch, a plump purple plum, or a fortune cookie—, to the head—as an empty cartoon balloon and then as a bladder—, to the penis—as first a sprouting hyacinth and then as a "slug from under a rock"—and to the other extremities. Another series, beginning with the title poem, which uses the cliché of the male artist giving birth to his poem amid flamboyant struggles and groans (an image by now somewhat tiresome, especially to women) describes different states of being—the Empty Man, the Invisible Man, the Cultivated Man, and the Married Man—each craftsmanlike, inventive, single-dimensioned, and charming. A series of clowns addresses several paintings of clowns, one a little too close for comfort to William Carlos Williams's opening line, "In Breughel's great picture, The Kermess." The section on "the sacred and the suburban" seems less satisfactory to me, perhaps because the effort to yoke those opposites together is too much of a strain, necessitating farfetched though humorous analogies, like a flotilla of suburban houses loosening their moorings, the decks bearing the tilting figures of housewives, sailing to Wall Street to retrieve their men. But there are jaunty individual poems—"Harlequin & Cock," a wonderful adaptation of the story of King Midas, and the sequence on the European scene (especially the "Chimney Sweeper's Cry"), which suggests that Phillips is more at ease when he does not have to glorify cornflakes and the barbecue pit.

A fresh appreciation of Heidegger

MARTIN HEIDEGGER

George Steiner

Viking, $10.95 173 pp.

William J. Richardson

THE COMPREHENSIVE title of this little volume suggests both its scope and its limitations. Its scope includes the whole of Heidegger from beginning to end, both as philosopher and as person. Its limitations are those of the essay format that permits the author to share with the reader a number of personal (often astute) insights into the meaning of Heidegger for contemporary thought but, once having piqued the reader's interest, provides him with little to gratify it. The result is a provocative essay that might be described, in imitation of the author's own preface, as "In Place of an Introduction."

The book's merits are several and real. Candidly admitting the limits of his competence in terms of technical philosophy, the author, whose own field is that of the study of language and its relation to literature on the one hand and to the history of ideas on the other, brings a freshness of view to the Heideggerian text that is invigorating. He begins in unorthodox fashion with a commentary on an essay of the later Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?* (1955) and then works backwards through the Heideggerian corpus to the landmark work, *Being and Time* (1927).

The purpose of his first chapter ("Some Basic Terms") is to sketch the fundamental problematic of Heidegger precisely in terms of its formulation in this later work and thereby to acquaint the reader with the sense of his characteristic terminology. The treatment is not systematic, but it is wide-ranging and all the essentials are there: Heidegger's ef-

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fort to think Being by thinking the foundations of metaphysics, his debt to the early Greeks in this endeavor, his insistence upon the importance of meditating the meaning of language in this quest, etc. In his exposition, the author tries to be as even-handed as possible, presenting the issues with detachment, taking sides with neither Heidegger's highly partisan sympathizers nor his equally vehement critics.

Proceeding "upstream" as he says, the author comes in his second chapter to an overview of Heidegger's major work, *Being and Time*. Here again the most stimulating aspect of his treatment is the freshness of vision that he brings to texts that have become classical, almost stereotyped, for the professional philosopher. But such a vision will not go without challenge, especially when it is the "existential" aspect of Heidegger's analysis that seems to interest the author most. Frequent allusions to Sartre, especially the reduction of Heidegger's *Nichts* to Sartre's *néant* (p. 35), leave the impression that the author reads Heidegger through Sartre's eyes. Again, we are told that "It is [care] that makes human existence meaningful. . . . The implicit vision is one of vehement humanity, endowed with that somber zest characteristic of Augustine, of Pascal, of Kierkegaard." Accordingly, for Steiner *Being and Time* is essentially "ontological 'anthropology'" that reaches its "apex" in the analysis of *Dasein* as Being-unto-death, after which the "organic cohesion" of the analysis seems to disappear. Such a reading, however, overlooks the primacy of the Being question in the analysis and fails to take account of the centrality of *time* in the whole problematic. It is time, after all, that gives sense to the book's title and eventually (by Heidegger's own testimony) plays an essential role in the famous "turning" (*Kehre*).

In concluding his treatment of *Being and Time*, the author seizes the occasion of his discussion of history and historicity to discuss Heidegger's political involvement with Nazism, finding this involvement not only reprehensible in itself but the philosopher's subsequent silence about it "very nearly intolerable." The author's judgment is harsh. In particular, he asserts: "There *were* instrumental connections between the language and vision of *Sein und Zeit*, especially the later sections, and those of Nazism." He does not show this in detail, however, and some maintain that he would be hard pressed to do so. He might find it easier to show that there is nothing in *Sein und Zeit* to *prevent* a surrender to Nazism, and this charge would be serious enough.

In the third chapter, "The Presence of Heidegger," the author returns to the later period to orchestrate the themes that are characteristic of it: poetry, art, creativity, the challenge of modern technology, etc. Here the author is completely and emphatically at home, with the result that this is by far the most satisfying part of the book.

In sum, this work has much to recommend it despite several limitations. Particularly annoying is the author's failure (no doubt in deference to the essay style) to give the source of his citations, so that there is absolutely no way for the reader to verify them or situate them in their context.

Add to this a failure to translate with orthographic consistency such key words as *Sein* (Being) and *Seiendes* (being), capitalizing now one, now the other. The latter word is rendered also by alternate terms such as "extant," "essent," and especially "existent" that, given Heidegger's idiosyncratic use of the word "existence," can only mislead the reader. His earlier insistence on the "theological" tone of Heidegger's work is mitigated somewhat by a later concession that Heidegger would "repudiate" the charge, a concession that then permits him to claim that Heidegger's effort is a "post-theology" (p. 156).

All in all, however, the impression of the book is positive and helps the reader to an appreciation of Heidegger that is, in the end, quite balanced: "In the forest clearing to which his circular paths lead, though they do not reach it, Heidegger has postulated the unity of thought and of poetry, and of that highest act of mortal pride and celebration which is to give thanks. There are meaner metaphors to live by."

In brief

JACK'S BOOK: AN ORAL BIOGRAPHY OF JACK KEROUAC *by Barry Gifford and Lawrence Lee, St. Martin's Press, $10.95, 339 pp.*

Whatever else can be said about Jack Kerouac's contribution to American letters, only one judgment seems clear: the beatnik is one of the well-established American images through which we have tried to understand ourselves. For some critics, the beatnik embodies the positive values of the American Dream. Free of materialism and the nation's accumulated sins, he is the peace-seeker, the absurd saint. For others, the beatnik is a social deformity sprung from the repressive soil of the fifties.

Whether seriously considering or seriously dismissing the Beat (for *beat*ific) Generation, one must greet with some cordiality *Jack's Book: An Oral Biography of Jack Kerouac* by Barry Gifford and Lawrence Lee. To fulfill their pur-

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pose of separating Kerouac the man from Kerouac the cult figure created, they contend, by the media, Gifford and Lee interview a litany of people who figure in Kerouac's works. "Because the cast reached Russian-novel proportions, we provided the character key as an aid to following their appearances in this book and those of their fictional shades in Kerouac's." Among the cast are the novelist's widow Stella Sampas Kerouac, William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Gore Vidal, and Malcolm Cowley. The interviews, structured in six chapters which follow Kerouac from birth to his death in 1969 at age forty-seven, are threaded together by the authors' interpretive commentary. Just as one can feel jammed with the innards of life while reading a Kerouac novel, one is similarly glutted with biographical minutiae in *Jack's Book*.

What if Gallagher and Lee had turned their oral history on Frost of New England, Faulkner of Yoknapatawpha, even, in wild fantasy, the Bloomsbury Group? Alas, the reviewer commits the arch sin of literary criticism by otherwise wishing. The legacy of Gifford and Lee is in their energetic technique of wedding oral history and literary biography. For that reason alone, *Jack's Book* must be greeted cordially.

ELEANOR WYMARD

CLAIMS IN CONFLICT: RETRIEVING AND RENEWING THE CATHOLIC HUMAN RIGHTS TRADITION, *by David Hollenbach, Paulist Press, $5.95, 219 pp.*

This book attempts two major tasks: to trace the development of papal teaching on human rights from Leo XIII through Paul VI, and to suggest some principles which could be used as the basis for ranking human rights. Which human rights are more important than others? Hollenbach notes that even the term "human rights" is ambiguous. For people in the western democracies, the term connotes personal civil rights; for the members of the Communist bloc, economic and social rights are meant. Yet for the popes, as well as in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the term is all-inclusive. The right to food is a basic human right and so is the right to free speech.

Hollenbach observes that the stress on different sets of human rights has given the unfortunate impression that peoples and governments can choose between them. Yet, citing cogently examples from Latin American countries, he indicates that regimes which are repressive in regard to civil rights consistently suppress the economic rights of the masses of their people as well.

However, liberation theologians are chary of using the terminology of human rights at all, so closely for them is it still connected with capitalistic individualism. For us in western democracies, then, the major task may be to raise our consciousness that human rights are preeminently *social*, referring as they do to the person *in community*.

For the church, Hollenbach sees the most important task today as developing a theory of social conflict. For Leo XIII and Pius XI competing claims over human rights were to be resolved using a model of stable, hierarchical society. But such a society no longer exists. In modern, pluralistic societies claims will have to be resolved through conflict, which does not necessarily need to be destructive of a larger and deeper social unity. Hollenbach suggests that competing claims be resolved by giving priority to the needs of the poor, the powerless, and the other groups which are marginal to society.

What policies should be developed within a society and internationally to make this principle effective is an issue beyond the scope of this book. So greatly do I appreciate Hollenbach's work that I look forward to a sequel in which he will incorporate the thinking of Pope John Paul II. Perhaps he could include as well more material from sociology and political science on the functions of social conflict and on mechanisms for mediating conflicting claims.

DOROTHY DOHEN

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 130)

an error made back in 1842, in regard to the meaning of the phrase "laws of the several states" occurring in the Judiciary Act of 1789. Justice Story, speaking for the Court in 1842, had claimed that the "laws" there meant only legislated laws, statutes. In fact, as Warren showed, it meant both statute and case law. Story's training should have led him to realize that. Similarly, Justice Blackmun's share of common knowledge should have led him, when he spoke for the Court in 1973, to understand that the old state abortion laws he was about to strike down had been instituted primarily to protect unborn babies and not, as the abortionists argued, the mothers.

But for neither man did the truth prevail. As a result of the 1842 error, the Court strayed for many years, and was only finally convinced of the truth by Warren's recovery of old records from the attic and cellar of the Capitol. The evidence, clearly visible in the original draft of the Act, was not only reported, but a photostat was offered to dispel any doubt about Warren's interpretation.

The conclusion for liberals, and particularly for scholarly liberals, seems clear. The Court needs to be shown, through authentic old records, (readily available) that the old abortion laws were in fact intended to protect the baby.

JOHN DOEBELE

Is law the answer?

Saxtons River, Vt.

To the Editors: Mary Meehan's "The Other Right to Lifers" [January 18] is a readable, informative and perceptive examination of people, ideas and facts in the current abortion problem. The author speaks openly. Her description of several abortion procedures shows plainly the violence inherent, whatever method is used. Her own views are clearly given, without malice or retaliation towards persons who hold otherwise.

Ms. Meehan's roster of activists against the arms race, capital punish-

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ment, nukes etc. whose pro-life stance includes protection of fetal life, is encouraging. For readers who believe abortion is moral evil, social injustice, potential genocide, it is good to find unexpected allies. Some of those Ms. Meehan names are in the unwritten hagiography of our own country, contemporary saints within and without the Catholic church, persons of many persuasions and distinctions.

Is there hope for increase of dialogue and of popular articles by knowledgeable, responsible writers investigating realities of abortion problems? For conscientious believers one disturbing problem is how to decide what courses of action are best taken to affect what they see as a growing evil, alone or in teamwork with others. What petitions one can responsibly sign, what banners one is willing to carry, can become complicated choices.

An imminent question which influenced voters in 1979 and is likely to influence 1980 elections, is whether or not a law against abortion (for all or for those who cannot pay the bill) is even a temporary solution to the growing problem. All evils of society cannot be solved by legislating against them. Laws prohibiting divorce in "Catholic countries" have not prevented family break-up, concubinage, child neglect, intramarital injustice. They have often brought additional tragic problems into marital relationships. To judge by recent published pieces on pickpocketing, laws against this ancient employment have had little effect. When laws are unenforceable, solutions must be sought through other means, particularly through moving deeper into understanding of essential causes. One must wonder: if a miniscule fraction of the cost, the energy, the dedicated thought, the organizing which are now spent on opening or closing abortion clinics, on legalistic agenda and drawn swords between promoters and opposers, were to go into child care, health care, provision for decent housing and employment, sex and family life education, help to persons who cannot support their own burdens, feeding those who are hungry whether biologically, mentally, socially or spiritually, would abortion as a major social problem be cut down to size? If we stopped the armaments race and destroyed our stockpiles? The questions may seem fantasy but we know fundamentally that abortion and other stringent social problems cannot be solved until we achieve tremendous change in total social structure. It is a truism that social democracy will not happen without economic democracy, social justice without economic justice.

The 1979 political adventures directed against congresspersons and local candidates on the single issue of their unwillingness to support an amendment or law against abortion were mischievous. In some states they ousted able legislators whose records on justice and human well-being had been forcefully demonstrated. They voted in racists, anti-minority, pro-excess profits and pro-Pentagon hacks who were conveniently pro-Hyde amendment. To label men and women who would not endorse a specific proposal "abortionists," as zealots have done, is dishonest or myopic.

More historical knowledge is needed by many of us. Apparently the practice of abortion is as old, its patterns and legitimations as varied as those of prostitution. Yet pronouncements often sound as though abortion were invented by the Supreme Court in recent years. Enormous figures for abortions performed since the Supreme Court ruling are quoted but increase is not known since earlier statistics were for the most part uncounted or erased. A few decades ago when well-heeled women went to Sweden or elsewhere for abortions there was plenty of gossip about it but no movement against it. There was no strong movement against affluent doctors casually dubbed "baby butchers" nor against nameless practitioners with nostrums and coat hangers who welcomed paying customers in dirty, hidden quarters. The real moneymakers from women in destitute poverty and from terrified or cynical kids, the networks of subterranean operators who collected the profits, went as unchallenged as now do the hierarchy of bosses in the dope trade who pick up the cash bags from the street pushers.

We need continued theological examination of problems, in addition to other social study of the realities, anthropological (now so popular) and economic. Useful guidelines can come from these. For biblical illiterates among us, a far more comprehensive scriptural base is needed, in a historical perspective. The decalogue and appeal to abstract tradition are not enough.

The seeds of Ms. Meehan's short article might engender a great deal more illumination, from herself and other authors.

MARJORIE MURPHY

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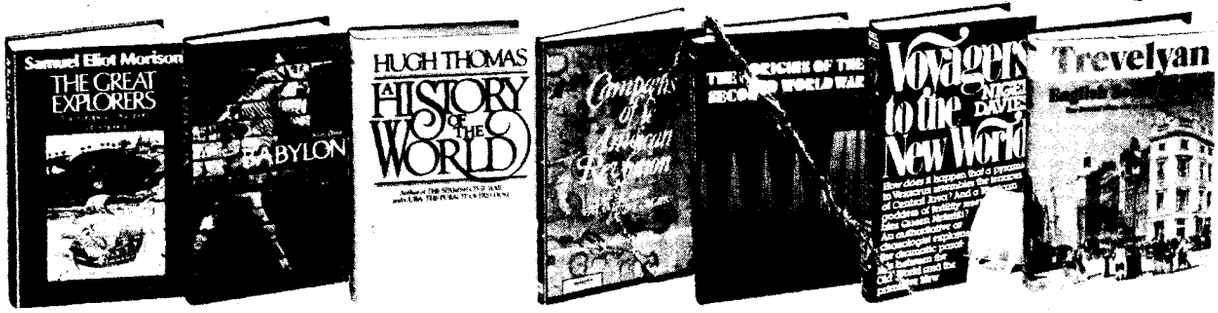

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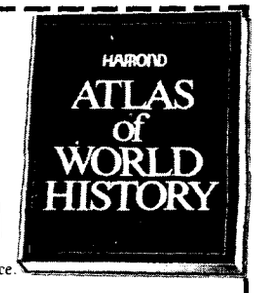

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